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DIBDIN'S

HISTORY

OF THE

STAGE.

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A

A COMPLETE HISTORY

OF THE ENGLISH

STAGE.

WRITTEN BY

MR. CHARLES DIBDIN.

THE PLAYERS CANNOT KEEP COUNSEL; THEY'LL TELL ALL

VOL. V.

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THE

STAGE.

BOOK IX.

FROM THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF GARRICK TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR ITALY.

CHAP. I.

COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH STAGE, AND A CONTINUATION OF AUTHORS.

BEING now upon the point of introducing the greateſt actor that ever exiſted, for ſo we muſt pronounce GARRICK to have been if all we have witneſſed of him, added to all we have been told of others, be fairly weighed and conſidered, it will be neceſſary to ſhew how many adventitious circumſtances combined together to lend aſſiſtance to that merit which, like every thing elſe tranſcendant, received brilliancy from competition.

The collateral advantages from which GARRICK derived aſſiſtance, in a higher degree than BETTERTON, were the large and valuable ſtock of materials with which the ſtage had been furniſhed originally at home, as well as thoſe imported from FRANCE; which laſt, however inferior to the ſterling value of meritorious Engliſh productions, by lending a variety to dramatic entertainments, heightened conſiderably the effect of talents ſo verſatile as thoſe of this actor.

It will be unneceſſary again to go over the ground of the French drama, or to ſhew that, whatever there might have been both of theatrical regularity and ſprightlineſs, there was a paucity, and a ſameneſs, which the worſt Engliſh writers would have diſdained to copy, or, indeed, if they had copied, the dulleſt Engliſh auditor would have been abſurd enough to tolerate. VANBRUGH, nevertheleſs, turned MOLIERE and REGNARD to advantage, DESTOUCHES, LE SAGE, BOURSAULT, and at length VOLTAIRE, and many others, became faſhionable when metamorphoſed by their Engliſh tranſlators, and that merit which it has been pretty clearly ſhewn that the French originally derived from us, after being filtered into inſipidity by them, regenerated by being again revived in its more congenial

ſoil, exactly as our golden pippin, planted in AMERIA, enlarges in bulk and degenerates in flavour, but which, replanted in ENGLAND, regains its uſual ſize, and embibes its original ſweetneſs.

The French authors, who died in the interval between SHAKESPEAR and GARRICK, a liſt of which I have before me where I count more than four hundred and fifty, many of them voluminous writers, inundated the theatre with an incomprehenble number of pieces—but what were they? The moſt trifling and flimzy popular anecdote was ſubject enough for a French comedy, and this maigre kind of diet made their ſeaſon of acting plays a ſort of dramatic Lent, and the Dorantes, and Eraſtes, the Scapins, the Criſpins, and the Blaiſes, differently dreſſed and ornamented, were ſtuffed down their throats, like the painted eggs in *Careme*, which, whether you chuſe red, yellow, blue, or purple, are ſtill hard, undegeſtible and inſipid, and ſtill eggs.

Theſe would not content an Engliſh ſtomach, and, therefore, none of their plays were ever tranſlated to advantage, except by thoſe who knew how to incorporate with them a little ſtamina. When they were brought out here in that ſtate, it cannot be denied that we have benefited by the chance,

of which the *Confederacy*, and *Zara*, are ſtill ſtriking proofs. The contrary has however, at particular periods prevailed, and we have ſeen genteel comedies, and ſentimental comedies. baniſh for a time, fair humour and honeſt laughter from the ſtage.

But, as there will hereafter come an opportunity when we may indulge in obſervation upon this ſubject, I ſhall at preſent wave this and every thing elſe to bring up the account of authors till 1741, after which, to the death of GARRICK, though there will remain plenty of names, and certainly ſome admirable materials, it is wonderful how little that can be called excellent, will be found when the number of admirable actors are conſidered that gave advantage to literary fame during that period.

To prepare my way for this examination, I muſt ſlightly touch again on thoſe whoſe productions are yet brought no further than 1708, and the firſt left in that imperfect ſtate, was STEELE, whoſe private conduct, having already been noticed pretty much at large as it was involved in the hiſtory of theatrical management, it will be only neceſſary to ſpeak now of The *Conſcious Lovers*, his laſt play that was performed, though there are two other plays attributed to him, called, The *Gentlemen*, and The *School of Action*.

The *Conſcious Lovers* is an inſtance that there is no danger in permitting an author to borrow when he knows as well as STEELE did how to improve his materials. This comedy which was produced in 1721, is imitated from the *Andria* of TERENCE, but improved exactly in the way that an excellent engraver immortalizes an inſipid and ſpiritleſs painter. Here, however, the compariſon drops for it is not only heightened, ſo as to be ſuperlatively ſuperior to the original, but embelliſhed with ſcenes of great intrinſic merit purely the author's own. Among theſe are every thing that belongs to Tom and Phillis, and that admirable ſcene between Myrtle and Bevil, in which duelling is execrated in ſo noble and ſo dignified a manner, from which ſcene RICHARDSON has evidently taken more than a hint in *Sir Charles Grandiſon*.

We now go to Mrs. CENTLIVRE's comedy of the *Buſy Body*, which proves that members of a theatre have not in all caſes any very ſtrong eventual judgment; for, as we have ſeen, it was expected to be damned, and even WILKS ſwore that no audience would ever endure ſuch ſtuff. The event, as we well know, gave the lie to their predictions, and whenever there has been a good Marplot it has never ceaſed to be a popular play.

The *Man's Bewitched*, performed in 1710, has the uſual fault of Mrs. CENTLIVRE's plays. It is flimzy; it is however ſprightly and full of whim, and thoſe, who have an inclination to leave rigid criticiſm at home, may laugh very heartily at many of the incidents whenever they are well acted. *Bickerſtaff's Unburrying*, *Marplot*, a ſequel to the *Buſy Body*, and the *Perplexed Lovers* add little to this lady's reputation, and will never again, perhaps, trouble the public.

The *Wonder*, performed 1713, is certainly the beſt of Mrs. CENTLIVRE's plays; and, for an intricate and perplexed plot, is one of the fulleſt of intereſt and pleaſantry that can be conceived. There is nothing that the dulleſt auditor cannot eaſily conceive, and yet the whole depends upon a myſtery inextricable to the characters themſelves. Jealouſy in comedy is, perhaps, depicted in this play better than in any other, and the characters are highly drawn, and ſtrongly contraſted. It requires, however, excellent acting, and perhaps, Felix was never repreſented to perfection, from its firſt appearance to this moment, but by GARRICK.

Mrs. CENTLIVRE ſeems to have written well only at intervals. The *Gotham Election*, The *Wife Well Managed*, and The *Cruel Gift*, not having the

gift of pleaſing the public, or enſuring any reputation for their writer. The latter of theſe pieces was a tragedy, and therefore too ponderous a ſubject for ſo feeble a pen.

A Bold Stroke for a Wife, which except The *Artifice*, a comedy that had no ſucceſs, is the laſt of this writers productions, was brought out in 1718. It is by no means a good play, for the language is poor, and the circumſtances impoſſible; but there is ſo much of whim, contrivance, and pleaſant variety in it, that it is difficult to refrain from laughing at different parts of it. The performance, however, of Feignwell is ſo hard a taſk that the part has never yet been acted in all its requiſites to perfection.

SOUTHERN remains yet to be ſpoken of, ſo does CIBBER, with whom I ſhall finiſh the account of reſumed authors. The *Spartan Dame*, which was produced in 1719, though it has not kept the ſtage, is by no means a trifling addition to the fame of this charming writer. The heroine of this play is finely drawn, and the language has a great deal of that nature, and pathos, that characterize ſo markingly the beauties of SOUTHERN. This play, nobody knows why, was prohibited for a conſiderable time. One attempt more, an abortive one, cloſes the liſt of this author's

productions, in which thoſe requiſites of exquiſite beauty and impreſſive intereſt that I have with pleaſure enumerated, ſtand highly diſtinguiſhed among the beſt excellencies of tragedy,

CIBBER's remaining pieces are twelve in number. The *Rival Fools* was performed in 1709. It did not ſucceed owing in ſome meaſure to thoſe enemies that CIBBER's comfortable ſituation very naturally conjured up againſt him. It has a reſemblance of BEAUMONT and FLETCHER's *Wit at ſeveral Weapons*, but is not ſo good an improvement on theſe authors as CIBBER's amendments generally were.

Venus and Adonis is merely an interlude, and one of thoſe things which managers, inconveniently enough, are now and then conſtrained to prepare to eke out other matter. The muſic was compoſed by PEPUSCH, who had great merit, but who too ſervilely ſhrunk under the influence of HANDEL. *Myrtillo* is criticized by the above comment on *Venus and Adonis*,

We come now to the *Nonjuror*, confeſſedly taken from MOLIERE's *Tartuffe*, but materially improved. The *Coquet of High Life* has never been drawn ſo

well upon the whole as by CIBBER; and after Lady Betty Modiſh, perhaps Maria, is in his boldeſt and trueſt manner. Nothing can anſwer the true end and drift of real comedy better than the operation of this piece upon the human mind. A pernicious ſerpent, under the veil of ſanctity, who gets admittance into the houſe of a gentleman to work his ruin by the ſeduction of his family, it is the true province of the ſtage to expoſe and puniſh.

CIBBER, however, got all the critics againſt him, as had MOLIERE before him; and, as they were ſtirred up by thoſe who did not, perhaps, chuſe to appear openly, for fear of appropriating to themſelves ſome of thoſe fair ſtrokes of ſatire which could alone be levelled againſt the villany of hypocricy, they employed, by way of a vehicle, *Miſt's Journal*, a paper of all work, and it is ſhrewdly ſuſpected, not without great colour of truth, that POPE was not a little active in this dirty work, for it happened immediately after the damnation of that farce written by POPE, ARBUTHNOT, and GAY, which we know gave riſe to the enmity of POPE againſt CIBBER, and introduced the *Laureat* into the *Dunciad*.

CIBBER with his uſual gaiety and good nature, for it muſt be allowed that he had the good ſenſe

never to be hurt by folly of this kind, ſpeaks of this circumſtance with the ſame coolneſs with which he wrote to POPE, where he moſt pointedly ſhews the malignity and burning envy that had actuated all his conduct towards him, merely one would think becauſe nature had not given him the talent to write plays. The *Nonjuror*, in ſpite of all its enemies, had great ſucceſs, and made a conſiderable addition to its author's reputation *.

Ximena, performed in 1709, is a tragedy, a ſort of productions in which CIBBER certainly did not excel. It is in ſome degree taken from The *Cid* of CORNEILLE. The *Refuſal, or the Lady's Philoſophy*, borrowed principally from *Les Femmes Savantes* of MOLIERE, had not ſo much ſucceſs as it deſerved. MIST and his abetters had not forgot The *Nonjuror*, and beſides the ſevere ſtrokes in it which were levelled at the famous South Sea bubble, were not

* MIST ſeems to be extremely angry with CIBBER that he could never ſo far catch him off his guard as to give him any reply, and got at laſt ſo exaſperated at finding that nothing could irritate him, that a paragraph appeared in his paper, when CIBBER lay very ill, that he was dead. CIBBER, bad as he was, upon this, unexpectedly appeared on the ſtage and thus gave the lie direct to the libeller; which, without conſidering the ſhame it heaped on himſelf, MIST congratulates himſelf upon, calling it an anſwer to his paragraph.

eaſily pardoned by thoſe they expoſed; though nothing can be fairer game for ſcenic detection than any ſpecies of national fraud. *Cæſar in Egypt* is another tragedy, the ſubject of which is furniſhed by CORNEILLE. It would have been better for CIBBER and the ſtage if he had employed the time he took to prepare this piece for the theatre, by writing a comedy.

The *Provoked Huſband*, as the world knows, was left in an unfiniſhed ſtate by VANBRUGH, and brought forward with material alterations by CIBBER; indeed more than half of it was written by him; VANBRUGH having written little more than that part of it which relates to ſir Francis Wronghead and his family. CIBBER's enemies, however, determined to do the thing judiciouſly, choſe to ſelect what they ſuppoſed to be his, and right or wrong damned VANBRUGH when they thought they were damning CIBBER. This he detected to their confuſion, by publiſhing the play as VANBRUGH had left it behind him, and thus he proved, to the ſatisfaction of every ſenſible critic, with how much judgment he had improved a celebrated author without injuring his fame.

The *Rival Queens* was a parody on LEE's *Alex-*

ander. We know but little of its reputation, yet, though it had ſome humour, it is very unlikely that it had ſucceſs. *Love in a Riddle* was a paſtoral, and one of the earlieſt pieces of this kind brought out after the *Beggar's Opera.* It is wonderful how CIBBER could ſee ſo little of probable conſequences as to imagine that any thing written profeſſedly in imitation of a piece ſo very popular, let whatever be its merit, could poſſibly ſucceed. There can be no doubt but party, right or wrong, wrought the fall of this opera; for it certainly had merit, and the idea of the author's endeavour to ſtrike a ballance in favour of morality by making virtue as captivating as GAY had rendered vice alluring, was perfectly laudable; but to oppoſe the torrent of faſhion is always madneſs, and CIBBER ought to have known better. The piece, cut down to a farce, under the title of *Damon and Phillida*, has always been conſidered as an entertaining trifle.

Papal Tyranny in the reign of King John, is by no means borrowed from SHAKESPEAR's play, though written upon the ſame ſubject. In this play CIBBER, in imitation of ÆSOP, returned to the ſtage very late in life, for it came out in 1744, at which time its author was ſeventy-three. He did not, however, meet with the reception of ÆSOP;

for, in ſpite of the impediments nature had added to thoſe he formerly laboured under, there was a dignity and a grace in his performance of Pandolph which the public very warmly applauded. The play had merit, but it is very probable that the actor ſaved the author, or at leaſt reaped the greateſt ſhare of public favour. It is needleſs to ſay that no *King John* has ſince been popular but that written by SHAKESPEAR.

With *Hob in the Well*, which is well known, and no more than DOGGET's *Country Wake* cut into a farce, we take leave of CIBBER; an author, a manager, and an actor, whoſe whole ſtudy was to promote the credit, the character, and the conſequence of the theatre; who, in his writing, as well as in all his public conduct, was the encourager of merit, the friend of decorum, and the advocate of morality.

CHAP. II.

ADDISON, GAY, FIELDING, AND HILL.

As the authors, immediately preceding GARRICK, furniſhed many of the materials with which he worked out his fame, it is proper to continue a clear account of them till his appearance. We have, therefore, yet to examine all thoſe who wrote in the interval between 1708 and 1741.

ADDISON, a very great ornament to letters in this country, who poſſeſſed many of the uſeful requiſites of an author, and hit the middle line of writing with more felicity and exactneſs, than perhaps any other, claims a place here as the author of *Cato*, *Roſamond*, and The *Drummer*. It will not, however, be enough to mention his plays; for, though I cannot be of opinion with Dr. JOHNSON that it is either worth while or neceſſary to give our days and nights to the labours of ADDISON as the ultimatum of atchieving an Engliſh ſtyle, yet many of thoſe labours are valuable and an advantage to literature,

The *Spectator*, certainly not originally ADDISON's idea but that of STEELE, who began the *Tatler*, a work of the ſame complexion, without the participation of any other writer, has in it particular papers which have ſuch a peculiar neatneſs, for what they are, as perhaps cannot be parallelled. Thoſe eſſays which are written on the common and ordinary occurrences of life, are wonderfully adapted to all capacities, and at the ſame time they teach an elegance of ſpeaking and thinking, they have a drift more noble; no leſs than that of regulating the mind, and teaching the heart to love morality.

When ADDISON goes beyond theſe known and obvious ſubjects, he however is not ſo happy. His zeal is as fervid, and his motives as ſincere; but his arguments are often fallacious, and he ſeems more to have the wiſh than the ability to convince. As, however, common readers do not make this diſtinction, his end is generally obtained; and, whatever may be the nice difference which oblige men of diſcernment to give him that credit for the will which they cannot for the deed, it were to be wiſhed that the youth of both ſexes might be reſtricted from reading that abominable traſh which lumbers up the circulating libraries, and obliged to treaſure the admirable leſſons which will be found in ADDISON's papers in this publication.

As for the reſt of his proſe, it was generally provoked from him to ſerve that party purpoſe, which for the moment he eſpouſed, and we ſee him promoted from a penſion of three hundred a year, to the place of ſecretary of ſtate, mounting ſtep by ſtep to the top of preferment's ladder, of which his various publications formed the rounds. All this is manifeſted in various papers in The *Guardian*, The *Freeholder*, The *Old Whig*, and other productions.

As to his poetry, however it might have been extolled by thoſe whom he patronized, it has now found its level; and, when we hear from his admirers, of which they are now but few, that his *Ode to St. Cecilia* is beautifully correct, though it is a poor copy from DRYDEN, that The *Letter from Italy* is more correct, though Dr. JOHNSON acuſes him of having made a goddeſs a horſe, and a boat, in two lines by bridling her for fear ſhe ſhould launch into a ſong, and that The *Campaign* is corrector ſtill, of which nobody remembers any thing but the *Angel*, borrowed, though it has eſcaped all his critics, from *King David*, we are furniſhed with all the praiſe beſtowed on ADDISON as a poet.

Though I have by no means the ſmalleſt inclination to qualify the foregoing paragraph, it cannot be denied that ADDISON has ſome ſterling merit as

a poet, but whenever poetry is derived from erudition rather than from genius it muſt of courſe be in proportion leſs intrinſic, and occaſional and complimentary verſes, however well written, claim a place only on the threſhold of Parnaſſus.

ADDISON's firſt dramatic piece was *Roſamond*. It was performed in 1704, and contains, perhaps, more lines truly poetical than any thing he has written. It is, however, ſlimzy; and, though there is ſome attempt at comedy in *Sir Truſty and Gride-line*, the whole is a drawing in water colours, neat, correct, and pretty, but neither intereſting, warm, or beautiful. A great deal has been urged to prove that it was a folly in ADDISON to write ſo well for muſic, which he himſelf ſays, as we have ſeen, ought only to be coupled with nonſenſe. Now it ſo happens that this remark ſtigmatizes for one thing *Alexander's Feaſt*, and for another thing MILTON's *Comus*, and TICKEL, ADDISON's *Dumby*, inſiſts upon this rule ſo ſtrongly, in a flaming copy of verſes, that he ſays poetical compoſitions for muſic are "innocent of "thought," meaning to ſhew, by a ſtroke of his own, that he knows what it is to be both ignorant and dull, for poetical compoſitions cannot think; but, if they could, it would be difficult to prove why thought muſt neceſſarily imply guilt.

It is not very material to go at length into the merits of *Cato*. It is a moſt ponderous tragedy, and was rated, at leaſt, according to its weight. It ran for eighteen nights, and was uſhered into notice by eight complimentary verſes, beſides a prologue by POPE, and an epilogue by GARTH. It is by much the beſt written of all ADDISON'S poetical works; and, that they may ſecurely rate its real merit, it is decided by the French to be a true model for tragedy; that is to ſay, it is the eſſence of every thing heavy, dull, and declamatory.

At the time this play made its appearance, it was conſidered and taken up as a party buſineſs. CIBBER tells us that the whigs applauded it as a warm compliment to their cauſe, and the tories re-echoed the applauſe to ſhew that they were not hurt. POPE ſays, that at every two lines of his prologue he was clapped into a ſtaunch whig, and that at the ſame time the author was ſweating behind the ſcenes to find that the applauſe came more from the hand than the head.

Cato has been too warmly admired, and too ſeverely cenſured. VOLTAIRE has run into both theſe errors. Great French poets with leſs judgment have found in it no errors at all. DENNIS, whoſe obſervations

were always warped, has nevertheleſs hit upon a great deal of truth in his ſtrictures on *Cato*. His ridicule of ADDISON's having religiouſly obſerved the unity of place, and thereby rendered the action impoſſible, is as good as any thing in the rehearſal, and it cannot be denied that, as to conduct, there is nothing on the ſtage more completely abſurd than the management of the circumſtances in this play.

Time has, as uſual, ſettled every diſpute upon this ſubject. The day of prejudice is gone by, and, without reference to any party or any opinion, we ſoberly find that *Cato* is more properly a ſucceſſion of declamatory ſcenes than a tragedy; elegantly written, perfectly moral, and correctly in nature. We care no more about the characters than we are ſolicitous about the deliverer of a ſermon; we liſten to the ſentiments, we admire the beauty of their language, and we are delighted with the morality they convey. We are told that ADDISON was of this opinion, but that it was hurried on the ſtage through the importunity of his friends. Party prejudice turned out a lucky hit, otherwiſe, as the experience of the preſent time evinces, ADDISON would have been under the neceſſity of upbraiding his friends for inflicting on him a mortification which his own better judgment had warned him to avoid.

The *Drummer*, out of exceſſive modeſty, as it is ſuppoſed, ADDISON ſought to have concealed his pretenſions to as its author; nay, we have nothing but ſtrong circumſtances to warrant his being conſidered ſo at this moment. STEELE kept the ſecret till after his friend's death, and then aſſerted that he only knew it by a circumſtance; having been told by ADDISON, who put the play into his hands while ſome friends were preſent, that it was the production of a gentleman in company. The trait is ſingular and has been productive of ſome diſputation. STEELE's conduct, however, ſeems to be full of veracity and honour.

Willing to give every bird of Parnaſſus its proper feather he took an opportunity, when the feelings of the author could no longer be hurt, and indeed when the play had grown into a fame which was at firſt denied it, of placing it among ADDISON's works obſerving that it made no figure on the ſtage originally, though exquiſitely well acted, "and when I ob-"ſerve this," ſays he," I ſay a much harder thing "of the public than of the comedy." It is ſaid that both THEOBALD and TICKELL, knew the truth of this buſineſs even more correctly than STEELE, and that CONGREVE was very ſevere upon TICKELL for his taciturnity.

Certainly, conſidered as a play, it is the beſt in ADDISON's works, for it is as WARTON ſays, "a juſt pic-"ture of life and manners," and indeed the characters have a truth and a propriety that might have ſerved as a model, as WARTON hints, for more expert dramatic writers. There is a novelty and an intereſt in the fable, and none of the requiſites are for a moment violated; but the misfortune is that it is correct even to coldneſs, and, as *Cato* was tranſlated by DES CHAMPS, and pronounced the model of French tragedy, ſo was the *Drummer* by DESTOUCHES, and pronounced the model of French comedy *.

* I cannot refrain from noticing the principal heads of the preface to the French play of The *Drummer*. DESTOUCHES ſays that he does not copy DRYDEN, and other Engliſh writers; who, after enriching themſelves at the expence of French authors, write long prefaces to criticiſe them and turn them into ridicule inſtead of acknowledging their obligations to them. On the contrary he frankly owns he has borrowed this play from the great ADDISON, one of the beſt Engliſh authors, and who had not the leaſt averſion to French literature, which he has proved by imitating the exactitude and the decorum of the dramatic productions of that country. This comedy did not ſucceed on the Engliſh ſtage, and no wonder, for it had too much ſimplicity and regularity, and too few incidents. It had too much of the wiſdom of the French manners, and too little of thoſe enormous and monſtrous liberties in which the comic writers indulge themſelves in ENGLAND, mocking at the unities, and ſtuffing their pieces full of epiſodes, till they no longer can be taſted or underſtood. He goes on cenſuring that ſatire in Engliſh authors which he

This brief account is all that comes within my province in relation to ADDISON; who, as a man, was too modeſt to ſpeak in public, acknowledge his own writings, or in any other way appear to arrogate the ſmalleſt merit; yet he comfortably took to himſelf every lucrative ſituation that came in his way, and even married the mother of his pupil for aggrandizement, though he knew he ſhould not be happy, with all the ſacerdotal forbearance of a biſhop at his induction, which ſituation he is ſaid once to have aimed at; who was ſo good, that he undermined and injured almoſt all his friends, ſome of which conduct POPE called damning with faint praiſe. He took his friend STEELE in execution for a paltry hundred pounds, he ſickened with jealouſy at POPE's *Homer*, and he prevented the harmleſs and amiable GAY from enjoying that court favour which he had been ſo often promiſed, and was ſo juſtly entitled to; but he, no doubt, repented of theſe faults before he called in Lord WARWICK to ſhew "how a "chriſtian ought to die."

ſays attacks every thing and reſpects nothing; not even the fair ſex, who, however, take nothing amiſs if they happen to have their fans with them. He at length winds up this reprobation of Engliſh dramatic writers by adviſing them to form themſelves upon the example of the French theatre and ſhun the licentious works of BEN JONSON, DRYDEN and CONGREVE.

But the Gods took care of *Cato*, and fortune of ADDISON, and there is a ſpice of inflated vanity, of hypocritical affectation both in the author and his nominal prototype; a circumſtance that poſterity has pretty well regulated. We have here, however, nothing to do with him but as a writer, in which capacity he is better known by infinite degrees by thoſe papers in The *Spectator*, where he has treated familiar and domeſtic ſubjects, in which narrow circle nobody ever moved ſo nimbly or ſo expertly, than by the reſt of his writings. Theſe will ſecure him a peculiar fame, ſmall indeed, but brilliant; confined but valuable; brilliant becauſe they infuſe pleaſure, and valuable becauſe that pleaſure mends the heart.

The hiſtory of GAY is ſo well known, his amiable, mild, unſuſpecting heart, which permitted him to be bubbled by the South Sea ſcheme, and diſappointed at court, without having the power to bear up againſt misfortune, has been ſo much pitied and applauded, for it broke by the weight of the calamity it ſuſtained, and was afterwards univerſally and deſervedly commiſerated, that it is impoſſible to ſay any thing of this valuable man and meritorious writer here that the reader cannot anticipate.

GAY was an elegant poet, as his Paſtorals, his

Trivia, his Fables, and other things evince, and in proof that I ſpeak the general opinion, all theſe things are at this moment read with pleaſure. It is true they are of a ſecondary rank; but a great mind may be ſeen through an humble covering, and the violet, and the jeſſamine have charms in their ſimplicity with which the lily and the tulip, with all their gaudineſs, cannot impreſs the heart. If poetry be meant to dignify ſentiment, to exalt idea, and to charm the mind, why muſt the poet's reputation wait upon lofty and towering ſubjects, always falſe, and always dazzling?

When ſuch a poem as *Alexander's Feaſt* aſtoniſhes the world, a circumſtance that does not happen perhaps in ſeven centuries, I am willing to give any enthuſiaſtic tribute of admiration you pleaſe to the wonderful effort of extraordinary genius, and feel a fervent glow of gratitude that ſuch celeſtial ideas ſhould be conceived by a human creature; but, for feeling, for pathos, for mental pleaſure, for ſomething delicious to the ſoul, I had rather, and I am ſure I ſhall have every votary of ſenſibility on my ſide, be the author of *Black eyed Suſan* than half the *Odes* of PINDAR.

'Tis the cant of great poets, and the cant of great

critics, to rate every thing domeſtic, every thing familiar, every thing common, among the loweſt claſſes of poetry. This mode, however, of narrowing the avenues to the heart is a ſerious injury to the cauſe of rhime, which, by this rule, to be great muſt have every thing of pomp, and nothing of ſentiment; but the poſition is falſe. The conception aches at being perpetually fixed on grand objects, as our eyes are dazzled by looking full on the ſun; we ſicken at the glare though the genial influence it diffuſes is even neceſſary to our exiſtence. Thus when ſplendid virtues and ſtriking qualities are brought home to us, and exemplified in real life, the fiction is realized, and the heroes, gods, and guardian angels of poets, are found to have a practical exiſtence in the courage, love, and friendſhip of common mortals.

Among thoſe capable of giving poetry this impreſſion was GAY; who, if he had had nerve equal to idea, would have blendid all that is great in his writings with all that is beautiful. His dramatic pieces are upon various ſubjects, and variouſly conducted. Some are by no means happy, but none are deſtitute of merit.

The *Mohocks* is a ſhort piece attributed to this author, and generally believed to be his. It is in-

tended to expose the bucks of that day, who were a terror to all peaceable passengers, as we read in the *Tatlers* and *Spectators*. It had a laudable tendency, but being temporary we know but little of its success. The *Wife of Bath*, 1713, was GAY's first comedy, but it was an unsuccessful attempt, and was even rejected by the public upon a revival of it after the appearance of The *Beggar's Opera*.

The *What d'ye call It*, a burlesque production well known, had merit in its way. It was so well acted, as we are told by POPE, that Mr. CROMWELL, who was deaf, could not conceive how the audience could be kept in a roar of laughter while every thing was conducted with such solemnity on the stage. *Three Hours after Marriage*, though always set down to GAY, was, as CIBBER's letter to POPE sufficiently proves, the production of POPE, GAY, and ARBUTHNOT.

Every body knows that the piece failed, and that POPE grew upon this so inveterate against all dramatic writers, that he for ever afterwards envied them, and of course abused them in his writings; but it is not generally known that its failure was owing to the spirit of ARISTOPHANES which it breathed. It ridiculed most pointedly, and most undeservedly, a

very valuable member of ſociety becauſe he happened to be fond of foſſils, and the public were not at that time ripe for that bold, ungenerous and wanton perſonality, which I ſhall certainly warmly reprobate when I come to FOOTE. It, therefore, diſguſted the audience, and was in conſequence very properly withdrawn from the ſtage.

Dione was a tragic paſtoral, and profeſſedly in the manner of *Amynta*, and *Paſtor Fido*, ſubjects which we have ſeen frequently attempted before. It has merit, but when we conſider that RANDOLPH's *Amyntes*, though performed before the King and Queen, had very little public ſucceſs it is natural to ſuppoſe, however it might enrich the poems of GAY, that it was very wiſely ſuppreſſed as a ſubject for the ſtage.

The *Captives*, performed in 1723. GAY was uniformly unfortunate in relation to this play. He obtained leave to read it to the Princeſs of WALES; but, being very timid, and his attention entirely fixed on the perſonages about him, as he advanced to the company aſſembled upon this occaſion, he made a pantomime trick of his tragedy by tumbling over a ſtool, overturning a ſcreen, and throwing the audience into the completeſt confuſion. This is ſuppoſed to have been remembered during the re-

preſentation of the piece, which, on this and other accounts was very little attended to.

We come now to mention a performance celebrated more variouſly than any other production in the Engliſh language. The reader's recollection anticipates the mention of The *Beggar's Opera*, a piece which has been criticiſed in all manner of ways, and which has begot all manner of opinions. Some of theſe I ſhall preſently examine. In the mean time let us literally ſee its ſucceſs.

This piece, as we are told from the notes to the *Dunciad*, was performed ſixty three nights, the firſt ſeaſon, and repeated the following ſeaſon with the ſame extraordinary ſucceſs. It was performed thirty or forty times at moſt of the principal towns in the kingdom; at BATH and BRISTOL it was repeated fifty nights. The ladies carried about the favourite ſongs in fans, and handkerchiefs, and houſes were furniſhed with them in ſkreens. The *Beggar's Opera* was not only performed in ENGLAND but in IRELAND, SCOTLAND, and WALES; nay at MINORCA, and many other foreign places.

Its fame was not confined to the author. The actreſs who performed Polly, till then an obſcure

and not a very reſpectable character, became all at once the favourite, nay the toaſt, of the town. Her portrait was painted, and engraved, and ſold in great numbers; her life was written, eulogiums in proſe and verſe ſwarmed in the newſpapers, and in different periodical publications, books were made of her ſayings, and jeſts; and, to crown all, here I quote SWIFT, "after being the mother of ſeveral anti-"nuptial children, ſhe obtained the rank and title "of a dutcheſs by marriage."

As to the tendency of The *Beggar's Opera*, as if there was no fixed rule whereby to judge of a ſtage repreſentation, nothing can be more contradictory than public opinion concerning it. On one ſide Dr. HERRING, afterwards archbiſhop of Canterbury, and a number of adherents, condemned it as giving encouragement to vice by making a highwayman the hero, and diſmiſſing him with reward rather than puniſhment. On the other ſide, SWIFT, and another large party, contended that the piece was highly moral, for that it is impoſſible to place vice in too ſtrong or too odious a light.

SWIFT was certainly more in the right than HERRING; for, if the great, who are ſeverely ſa-

tirized in the perſons of Macheath and his gang, are truly ſatirized, then is the labour of GAY a valuable one; if not he wrote it only for thoſe whom the cap might happen to fit; and, as place, and preferment, and bribes, are the vehicles through which all gangs are kept together, no doubt there are characters in the world who are obliged to make wry faces and put it on, for as to HERRING's remark, that the hero goes unpuniſhed it is literally, but not virtually, a fact; for the *Beggar's Opera* was written as well to ridicule the Italian opera as to convey general morality, which laſt end the author had it in idea literally to inculcate, and therefore makes the poet ſay that it is his intention to hang Macheath, and either to hang or tranſport all the reſt of the perſonages. "Aye," ſays the player, "this would be very right provided "your piece were a tragedy, but being an opera it "it muſt end happily." "Your objection," replies the poet, "is very right, but the difficulty is eaſily "removed; for, in theſe kind of dramas, no matter "how abſurdly matters are brought about." He then makes the rabble cry a reprieve, and the captain is brought back to his wives in triumph.

Under this crooked policy, thoſe who ſmarted at the ſatire in this piece affected to ſhield their feelings; for no man in his ſenſes will aver that refuſing a li-

cence to the ſequel to it called *Polly*, which was the next of GAY's productions, was leſt highwaymen and houſebreakers ſhould be taught to glory in their wickedneſs; but leſt corruption ſhould be expoſed.

We know that whenever a magiſtrate, or other forward character, has wiſhed to add to his popularity he has pretended to deplore the immorality in the *Beggar's Opera*. Sir JOHN FIELDING did this, and others have done it; but it is difficult to ſay why thieves ſhould think it neceſſary to emulate Macheath when they can find the examples of Turpin, and Jack Shepherd, in the Newgate Chronicle; and, as to any hope of their eſcaping unpuniſhed, the very end of their exiſtence would not, according to their ideas, be accompliſhed if every thief of them did not make his exit upon his death bed at Tyburn. For the reſt, as this piece has ſo much of what SWIFT calls "not wit, nor humour, "but ſomething better than either;" as the ſongs are moſt charmingly written; as the fair purpoſes of honeſt ſatire are triumphantly accompliſhed; and, laſtly, as we owe to this lucky hit the ballad opera, which has very elegibly ſerved the cauſe of the drama, of poetry, and of muſic; I know not to whom the ſtage in any one inſtance has had more obligations than in this to GAY.

Polly was printed by ſubſcription. The reader has ſeen why it was never performed. It produced a much larger ſum of money for its author than it could have done had it made its public appearance even had its ſucceſs been equal to the *Beggar's Opera*, which event is impoſſible to have happened, for it had neither the novelty, the intereſt, the writing, or any other ſingle requiſite of equal merit to recommend it, and this ſhews how abſurd thoſe who were inimical to GAY acted, for had they let it come out, it would not only have died away unheeded itſelf, but have been a ſeverer reproach to its author than its ſuppreſſion; which, rather than injure GAY, liſted him into more conſequence *.

Acis and Galatea, a well known and beautiful written paſtoral opera, has been ſo often repeated and attended to with ſo much pleaſure, that it is un-

* This was pretty well evinced, when COLMAN revived it in the year 1777. It was then found to be an inſipid, unentertaining performance. A remarkable circumſtance happened upon this occaſion. The Ducheſs of Queenſberry, who had been GAY's patroneſs, who had made ſo much intereſt to get this piece performed, and who, finding the tide of power ſo ſtrong againſt it, was ſo very inſtrumental in procuring its author that large ſubſcription on the publiſhing it, was fifty years afterwards at this repreſentation of it in the Hay-market. She was very old and ſurvived her laſt viſit to this production of her favourite but a few weeks.

neceſſary here to dwell upon its merits. As to the muſic, as a work of genius, it is clearly the beſt compoſition of HANDEL. It is aſtoniſhingly varied, and yet always paſtoral; nay the very gigantic pipe of Polypheme ſeems to breath magnified tenderneſs; but I ſhall go into this more particularly hereafter, when I place HANDEL and ARNE by the ſide of each other.

Achilles was again an opera. It has had very little ſucceſs, either originally, or at any time when it has been revived. The *Diſtreſſed Wife*, a comedy, was left finiſhed by GAY, but not perhaps to that perfection it would have been had he lived to have ſeen it brought on the ſtage. It has been attempted, but without ſucceſs. There is another thing attributed to this author called The *Rehearſal at Gotham*, which we know but little about.

Thus we have ſeen that no one of his pieces had ſucceſs any thing equal to The *Beggar's Opera*, and the reaſon, in great meaſure, is, that they were generally upon the ſame plan without the merit of originality, or ſo fortunate a conveyance. This blunted the edge of the ſatire, and deſtroyed the intereſt. Another reaſon is that the muſic of The *Beggar's Opera* ſeems to have exhauſted all that was

to be found beautiful in ballad compoſition, or at leaſt it comprehended the moſt choice ſelection; for there cannot be any thing more exquiſite, natural, ſweet, and delightful, than thoſe airs. Who ſelected them we are not told; they were harmonized by PEPUSCH; and, when we find in them that the beſt airs originated as far back as FERRABOSCO and RIZZIO, who only improved what was more ancient, who ſhall ſhew melodies ſo delicious, ſo affecting, ſo winning, as thoſe of the Engliſh, and the Scotch.

Thus we have ſeen GAY leave a counter to ſhine in the moſt brilliant circles of poetic attraction; to be praiſed, envied, diſappointed, neglected, and at laſt to die with a broken heart. The world are certainly the better for this; but as to himſelf, however he acquired applauſe, patronage, reputation, and Poſthumous fame, his life would have been more happy and contented had he purſued any trade but the trade of a poet.

FIELDING was but an indifferent poet, but he has left behind him one ſpecies of reputation which no author ever ſo eminently poſſeſſed. His novels have hitherto been unequalled. *Tom Jones* is, perhaps, the fineſt aſſemblage of natural characters and

happy incidents in any language. *Joſeph Andrews* has a vein of the pureſt and moſt gratifying humour within the conception of human ingenuity; and were it not that it is profeſſedly written as a ſatire on one author, and in imitation of another, it would be very nearly a complete work in its kind. *Amelia* manifeſts a moſt aſtoniſhing judgment of FIELDING's knowledge of the world. There is ſcarcely a perſon or circumſtance introduced in that novel but every body knows to be ſomebody or ſomething already ſeen in real life. In ſhort, though theſe novels may have—and indeed ſo has the ſun, reſplendent as it is—ſomething to cavil at, yet the worſt of them greatly excels the beſt of any other author, if nature, truth, intereſt, humour, and character are the requiſites of ſuch productions.

FIELDING's dramatic works have great merit, but they are not ſo well calculated for the ſtage as the cloſet. He could not write ill; and, in general, his dialogue has marks of ſtrong nature and pointed character, but it is too witty. CONGREVE at laſt fell off as to ſucceſs. Sweets will cloy. This is however no reproach, but as men of genius, rather a compliment to both CONGREVE and FIELDING.

As it was impoſſible for FIELDING to bring for-

ward any work unworthy the attention of the public, ſo his dramatic pieces have a conſiderable claim to applauſe, but they were in general ſlight and indigeſted as to ſtage effect, the author ſeeming to fancy that the ſtrong and nervous ſtyle in which he was at all times capable of writing would anſwer every purpoſe. In this he was miſtaken, for CIBBER, who did not write ſo well, by knowing the trim of the theatre and the town had at all times better ſucceſs.

FIELDING's firſt piece was a comedy, called *Love in ſeveral Maſques*. It came out immediately after The *Provoked Huſband*. It nevertheleſs had good ſucceſs, and there is certainly in it ſome ſtrong and nervous dialogue. The *Temple Beau* was performed at Goodman's Fields in 1730. This was a haſty play but has nevertheleſs ſtrong wit and humour; but it is more gay than intereſting, which is FIELDING's great fault. The *Author's Farce*, which contains the rehearſal of another farce, called The *Pleaſures of the Town*, is a thing intended to ridicule the Italian opera. This has always been done with partial ſucceſs, but whoever attempts to deſtroy the Temple of Folly will ſoon ſee its votaries mending the depredations, as carefully, though not ſo laudably, as ants repair every innovation upon their neſts.

Tom Thumb is at this moment well known. Its humour is in the trueſt ſtyle of burleſque. The *Coffee Houſe Politicians* was performed at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, and had good ſucceſs. It is however greatly inferior to the generality of this author's dramatic works. The *Letter Writers* had much about the ſame fate and poſſeſſed the ſame pretenſions. FIELDING's five act pieces have always ſomething good but always want conſequence. The *Welch Opera*, which was afterwards called The *Grub Street Opera*, is by no means a good piece; ſome of the ballads are ſprightly, but upon the whole it is a ſtrange jumble.

The *Lottery* is a very pleaſant ballad farce. Indeed there are very few of FIELDING's after pieces that are not very entertaining. The *Modern Huſband*, 1734, was a ſound written comedy, but it was not ſufficiently ballanced by either pleaſantry or intereſt. The *Mock Doctor*, taken from MOLIERE's *Medicin Magre lui*, has been always a ſucceſsful favourite. FIELDING's genius ſeems to have a kindred feeling with that of MOLIERE; the humour however of both, though perfectly chaſte and natural, had ſomething too ſaturnine, ſomething too much of CERVANTES, for general broad laugh, an ingredient conſidered ſo neceſſary in farces.

The *Debauchees* was levelled at the Jesuits, and to good purpose; but one species of religious hypocricy is like another, and FIELDING was a good deal foreſtalled by DRYDEN's *Spaniſh Friar*, and CIBBER's *Nonjuror*, there is nevertheleſs conſiderable merit in the piece. The *Covent Garden Tragedy* is a burleſque on the *Diſtreſſed Mother*, but the characters are too low, being compoſed of bawds, bullies, and others of that deſcription. It has nevertheleſs conſiderable humour. The *Miſer* is certainly the moſt valuable of FIELDING's plays; it is MOLIERE's *Avare* but greatly improved. It is chaſte, proper, and full of nature; and, would ſome of our modern playwrights in this age of equivoque look at the ſcenes of coincidence in that comedy, it might be no bad hint to correct that monſtrous aſſemblage of unnatural and incongruous circumſtances that ſeem now to be received as the criterion of comic writing, or rather of comic plotting. Every real well wiſher to the intereſt and conſequence of the ſtage muſt grieve to ſee this valuable play cut down to a farce, and performed by the moſt indifferent actors in the theatre.

The *Intriguing Chambermaid*, 1733, is an admirable farce. It is in ſome meaſure taken from the *Diſſipateur* of DESTOUCHES, a piece with which ſeveral authors have made pretty free. *Don Quixote*

in England is, what one muſt naturally ſuppoſe, well written, for whoever copied CERVANTES ſo faithfully as FIELDING, and ill calculated for the ſtage, becauſe mere knight errantry without ſpectacle never yet had ſucceſs upon the Engliſh theatre. If he had carried *Don Quixote* to any other part of the world and have introduced a few elephants, or camels, and made him fight half a dozen tygers, and have decorated the ſtage with caſtles that loſe their battlements in the air, about fifteen feet from the ground, the whole an outrage upon nature, and art, the redoubted knight, as mad as his audiences, might have acted every ſpecies of extravagance to the admiration of full houſes.

The *Virgin Unmaſked*, and *Miſs Lucy in Town*, which is the ſequel to it, are pleaſant pieces, and claim a place among the Hoydens, Notables, Prues, and Corinnas; which, by being always in nature, give conſtant pleaſure. *Paſquin* and all the conſequences of its being performed we have already gone over as well as the *Hiſtorical Regiſter*. *Euridice* was damned, and *Euridice hiſſed* its ſequel, met with and deſerved the ſame fate, for an apology for a bad piece, when an author could have produced a good one, is an inſult and ought not to be admitted.

Tumble Down Dick was a ſatire upon RICH's Pantomimes, a uſeleſs one, becauſe nobody cared about the propriety of pantomimes ſo they had enough of Harlequin and Colombine. *Plutus* was tranſlated from ARISTOPHANES by FIELDING and YOUNG. It was never performed. The *Wedding Day*, acted in 1743, is a comedy which met with very little ſucceſs, and indeed deſerved very little. It was the laſt of FIELDING's pieces; who, had he lived in eaſe and tranquility would certainly have written better for the ſtage, for it is abſurd to ſuppoſe that he did not know every dramatic requiſite, and no man has given more abundant proof of being a complete judge of character, of effect, and of human nature.

AARON HILL, who ſeems to have fagged himſelf into learning, if not into genius; who did the taſk of the noble dunces at Weſtminſter ſchool, that his mind might have an unuſual portion of exerciſe; who, in his thirſt after knowledge, followed his relation lord PAGET, to CONSTANTINOPLE, and by this means travelled through EGYPT, PALESTINE, and the greateſt part of the Eaſt, in company with a well informed tutor; who afterwards became tutor to ſir WILLIAM HAMILTON, and acquitted himſelf, though little more than a boy, to the ſatisfaction of

his pupil's friends; who was the projector of nut oil, of masts of ships from Scotch firs, of cultivating GEORGIA, and of pot ash; and who, in short, as a writer had all the merit due at least to indefatigable toil and industry, was the author of seventeen dramatic pieces, principally tragedies.

Elfrid, produced in 1710, was afterwards re-written and brought out in 1731, under the title of *Athelwold*. It is an exaggeration of the story of ELFRIDA, in which the character of Athelwold is so totally different from the history as to be an object of detestation instead of pity; a circumstance that totally destroys the poetical beauty of the fable. Who but such an author in stilts could have thought of making that character an object of commiseration who is a traytor to his mistress, his friend, and his king. The *Walking Statue* was a farce and a very indifferent one. *Trick upon Trick* was again a farce. It was damned on the first night.

Rinaldo was the celebrated opera composed by HANDEL. We have seen that it was written by HILL in English, and translated into Italian by ROSSI, the BADINI of that day. The *Fatal Vision* was a tragedy, and performed in 1716. The second title of The *Fate of Siam* is fictitious and intended

only to give the appearance of truth to enforce the facts, which are wholly invention. It is written to reprobate raſhneſs; a kind of Lear in water colours. *Henry the Fifth* is a hiſtorical play, imitated from SHAKESPEAR. There is ſome merit in it, and the introduction of lord Scrope's niece, who had been ſeduced by Henry, and yet who diſcovers the plot upon his life, is intereſting; but nobody wiſhes to ſee SHAKESPEAR's plays altered, ſince it is ſo difficult for alteration to amend them.

Zara was performed in 1735. In this tragedy, which is taken from VOLTAIRE, and upon the whole is his beſt play, if not the beſt play upon the French theatre, HILL has gone ſo infinitely beyond all his other productions, that, in point of the true requiſites of tragedy, it is almoſt the moſt perfect alſo on the Engliſh ſtage. It conſiſts of a ſimple, intereſting, and unembarraſſed ſtory; and, being written at that time when VOLTAIRE had ſtill all that glow of patriotiſm in his mind which had revolted the minds of his countrymen when he wrote *Brutus*, it was peculiarly adapted to the Engliſh ſtage; ſo that HILL had that part of the work moſt likely to inſure its popularity ready done to his hands *.

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* I find an anecdote, in a French hiſtory of the Engliſh ſtage, re-

It is remarkable that *Zara*, both in FRANCE and in ENGLAND, had the adventitious advantage of being greatly aſſiſted at its firſt repreſentation; for as on the French ſtage, as I have already mentioned, it brought forward DUFRESNE, and Mademoiſelle GAUSSIN, ſo on the Engliſh ſtage, a near relation of HILL performed Oſman, and Mrs. CIBBER made her firſt appearance on the theatre in Zara.

Alvira, 1736, was alſo a tranſlation from VOL-

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lative to *Zara*, ſo ſingular; that, though I do not diſcover the ſmalleſt trace of it in all the Engliſh materials I have collected, I cannot refrain from relating it; eſpecially as time, place, and circumſtances, very ſtrongly combine to give it feaſibility. An Engliſh gentleman, named BOND, being delighted with the *Zaire* of VOLTAIRE, employed a poet of reputation to tranſlate it into Engliſh, and endeavoured to get it performed at Drury Lane theatre, but to no purpoſe. He therefore determined to get it repreſented privately among his friends, and choſe the part of Luſignan for himſelf. It was performed in a concert room, in York Buildings. Neither pains nor expence was ſpared to render the performance reſpectable, and the aſſembly was numerous and elegant. The applauſe was univerſal and well merited, but that beſtowed on Mr. BOND was much louder and more ſincere than all the reſt together. His acting was conſidered as a prodigy, and he yielded himſelf up ſo to the force and impetuoſity of his imagination, that, on the diſcovery of his daughter, he fainted away. Here the applauſe was redoubled; but, finding that he continued a long time in that ſituation, the audience began, they knew not why, to be uneaſy and apprehenſive. With ſome difficulty, Chatillon and Nereſtan, placed him in his chair, when he faintly ſpoke, extended his arms to receive his children, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and then cloſed them for ever.

TAIRE; but, though it is well written, it did not as we have seen succeed greatly in FRANCE. The truth is, it was too much after their own model in point of stage regularity, and too full of declamation, which HILL has unfortunately rendered duller than in the original. In FRANCE envy attributed it to some scribbler from whom it was said VOLTAIRE stole it, in ENGLAND it excited no envy, and therefore HILL was permitted quietly to keep it to himself.

These were all the works of HILL before the appearance of GARRICK, to whom we shall arrive, after I have in the next chapter given an account of inferior authors, from 1708 to that period.

CHAP. III.

CHARLES JOHNSON, HUGHES, THOMSON, THEOBALD, SAVAGE, LILLO, AND OTHER AUTHORS.

I AM now compelled to give the account of other authors, before GARRICK, as briefly as poſſible. I ſhall nevertheleſs mark as ſtrongly as my limits will permit me the moſt prominent features of their reſpective works; and, though I cannot dwell particularly on all the circumſtances that attended their ſucceſs, I ſhall endeavour to place every author in as conſpicuous a ſituation as his public reception entitled him to.

CHARLES JOHNSON, who, as we are told, was famous for writing a play every year, and being at BUTTON's every day, muſt, according to this calculation, have been before the public nineteen years; for he produced that number of dramatic pieces; the fact is, however, that he took one and thirty years to accompliſh that taſk. His firſt piece, The

Gentleman Cully, came out in 1702. It is only attributed to JOHNSON by COXETER, but it is no matter who was the author of it, for it has very little merit.

Fortune in her Wits, 1705. This is a bad tranſlation of COWLEY's *Naufragium Joculare*. It was not performed. *Love and Liberty*, a tragedy, was intended for Drury Lane theatre. It is dedicated to the judicious critics throughout the town, who had, however, no proper opportunity of judging of its merits for it was never performed. The *Force of Friendſhip* was a tragedy, and the firſt play poor JOHNSON could get on the ſtage. It however might as well have been kept off, for it was completely damned as well as an after piece, called *Love in a Cheſt* which accompanied it; ſo that, as far as we have gone, JOHNSON's labour was labour in vain.

JOHNSON, having hitherto found very few dramatic materials in himſelf, thought it would be a wiſer way to have recourſe to others. His next play called The *Wife's Relief*, is borrowed from SHIRLEY's *Gameſter*, and had ſucceſs. Its principal merits, however, we have gone over in the account of SHIRLEY. It was produced in 1712, The *Suc-*

ceſsful Pirate, 1713. JOHNSON next paid a viſit to CARLELL, from whom he ſtole the beſt materials he could in *Arviragus and Philicia*; but the original was bad, and the copy worſe. The *Generous Huſband* was borrowed from nobody, and therefore had no ſucceſs. The *Victim*, 1714. JOHNSON is charged with having borrowed this play from BOYER's *Achilles*, and RACINE's *Iphigenie*. It was time miſ-applied however, and ſo the public thought.

The *Country Laſſes* was a more fortunate buſineſs; for, in order to make aſſurance double ſure, it is as I formerly noticed taken from three plays, which had been in part taken from others. It has been at times revived with ſucceſs, and KENRICK faſhioned it into an opera which was performed at Covent Garden theatre. Upon this occaſion the muſician, whoſe name appeared in the bills as the compoſer, was determined to convince the public that he underſtood thieving as well as the original author of the piece.

The *Cobler of Preſton*, which is taken from SHAKESPEAR, was thought ſo well of before it made its appearance that BULLOCK, the actor wrote a piece upon the ſame ſubject which was begun and finiſhed in four and twenty hours, in order to get the

ſtart of the other; but if they had been both burnt before they had made their appearance it would have been no great matter. The *Sultaneſs* is a tranſlation of RACINE's *Bazajet*, which is his worſt play, and we find it here leſs conſiderable than the original. It was performed in 1717, and ſome how or other procured JOHNSON a corner in the *Dunciad*.

The *Maſquerade* was an inſignificant thing, entirely invented by JOHNSON. *Love in a Foreſt* is neither more nor leſs than SHAKESPEAR's *As You Like It*, moſt barbarouſly mangled and disfigured. It would inſult the reader to notice its ſucceſs. The *Female Fortune Teller*. This play is only attributed to JOHNSON. It is not very material, however, for it has not merit enough to help even his fame. The *Village Opera* is very poorly written, and had but indifferent ſucceſs. It furniſhed the hint, however, of *Love in a Village*, which is made up of this play, The *Gentleman Dancing Maſter*, *Le Jeu de L'amour et du Hazard* of MARIVAUX, and two or three other things.

With The *Epheſian Matron*, a farce of one act, *Medea*, a tragedy, only attributed to him, and bad enough to have belonged to a worſe author, and *Cælia, or the Perjured Lover*, we finiſh the plays of

CHARLES JOHNSON. The laſt of theſe he calls a play, and the epilogue was written by FIELDING; but he ſeems to have profited ſo little by his long experience that he left off as much ſlighted as he began.

Of HUGHES, whom it has been the faſhion to praiſe as a man and condemn as a poet, the world have ſeen nothing dramatic but The *Siege of Damaſcus* except ſome trifling and ſome unfiniſhed pieces. In that tragedy, however, there is enough of the poet and enough of the dramatiſt to ſhew that, had he thought proper to bend his talents more towards the ſtage, he would have ſtood very high as a theatrical writer. ADDISON had ſuch an opinion of him that he entreated him, out of deſpair, as he ſaid, of his own powers, to write a fifth act to *Cato*; but the jealouſy of the Dramatic Tartuffe made him ſoon repent of his requeſt, and before HUGHES had finiſhed it he took care to write one himſelf.

HUGHES, as well as a poet, was a muſician, and a painter, and of no mean deſcription; but he ſeems to have poſſeſſed the two laſt accompliſhments more as an amateur than a maſter. His taſte for muſic induced him to write cantatas and ballads; which, though haſty, are many of them very creditable.

Steele ſpeaks of him in thoſe three capacities very warmly, and, had not his zeal to check the Italian opera, the abuſes of which ſpectacle has always been abuſed and always will prevail, pervaded his muſical pieces, his time would not been have ſo ill employed.

Beſides the *Siege of Damaſcus*, of which the cooleſt of his admirers, for he had no enemies, ſpeaks of in terms of commendation, he wrote The *Miſanthrope*, a mere tranſlation, and never performed, and *Calypſo and Telemachus*, an opera, performed in 1712. The muſic was compoſed by Galliard, and it ſeems intended to ſhew what ought to be conſidered as rational in an opera, a part of that ſpecies of dramatic amuſement, even if it could be admitted, that would never be admired.

Apollo and Daphne was a maſque. This was written with the ſame laudable view but to no better purpoſe, *Cupid and Hymen* was a maſque of the ſame deſcription; which, with the firſt act of the *Miſer* from Moliere, and one ſcene only, from the *Oreſtes of Euripides*, make up the ſmall catalogue of this author's dramatic works.

Thomson, the celebrated author of the *Seaſons*, poems full of extraordinary merit, and extraordinary

ſingularity, to which latter quality they moſt owed their ſucceſs*, whoſe poetry has eminent beauties and groſs faults; but who had ſuch an original genius that the want of his name would make a ma-

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* As the *Seaſons* have been as much read and as much criticiſed as any thing in the Engliſh language, men of uncommon information have generally handled it with the greateſt ſeverity, which is a proof that its faults are ſuch as ought not to be pardoned to a man of brilliant genius. HERNE, the critic, whoſe obſervations, though critical and accurate, have ſeldom any acrimony, ſpeaks of THOMSON in one of his chapters on literature, where he treats of that figure in ſpeech which he calls utter abſurdity. I ſhall tranſcribe the paſſage.

"JAMES THOMSON in his poem called *Spring*, among his *Sea-*
"*ſons*, has with great tenderneſs of heart pleaded, as from his very
"bowels, againſt the inhuman practice of killing oxen to make beef
"ſtakes; and almoſt told us he would rather want his ſtake than
"have any ſuch doings. Nay, what is ſtill more tender, he adviſes
"us not to torment poor worms, by putting them upon the hook
"alive.—Upon the hook! For what purpoſe? Why to catch fiſh
"to be ſure; which he proceeds to give us cool directions for, as
"a fine diverſion.

"Strait as above the ſurface of the flood
"They wanton riſe, or, urg'd by hunger, leap,
"Then fix with *gentle twitch* the *barbed hook*;
"Some lightly toſſing to the graſſy bank,
"And to the ſhelving ſhore *ſlow dragging* ſome.

"O JAMIE, JAMIE! had you no bowels for fiſh? The poor man
"forgot that fiſh had feelings I ſuppoſe, becauſe he was fond of
"catching and eating them; whereas killing of oxen was quite out
"of his way."

terial chaſm in Engliſh literature, was the author of ſix dramatic pieces.

The firſt play of THOMSON was *Sophoniſba*; a ſubject we have ſeen repeatedly treated. It came out in 1730. At the time he was writing it, he had publiſhed *Winter*, which was written into fame, though it had merit, before it was known whether it poſſeſſed any at all. The public expectation, therefore, was a tip toe for this his firſt dramatic production, and the rehearſals were crouded by an aſſemblage of all that was faſhionable about town. This anticipation of its public reception, however, only foretold that its real effect would not be reputable. It was conſidered as a dull moral performance, and one ſingle line gave a ludicrous opportunity to turn it into a jeſt; a ſymptom generally fatal to tragedy.

This line was parodied in FIELDING's *Tom Thumb*. In THOMSON's play it was,

Oh, Sophoniſba, Sophoniſba, oh!

In FIELDING's farce it was,

Oh, Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!

and the town, by way of making it more ludicrous, added

Oh, Jemmy Thomſon, Jemmy Thomſon, oh!

If every tragedy were to be laid aſide for a nonſenſical line, I am afraid there would be but little employ for MELPOMENE.

Agamemnon, a tragedy, was performed in 1738, and had every aſſiſtance from Thomſon's friends, and among the reſt, POPE, affecting to patronize it, placed himſelf very forward in the theatre during its repreſentation. The good people of England, however, like to feel for themſelves, and could not be taught to find any merit in it.

Edward and Eleonora was prepared for the ſtage, but interdicted by the Lord Chamberlain, ſome ſay by the connivance of the author, who feared its public fate; but this is a very improbable ſtory. The hiſtory of the play is well known, or rather well believed. It is the circumſtance of ELEONORA, queen to EDWARD the Firſt, who is ſaid to have cured her huſband by ſucking the venom from a wound he received from a poiſoned arrow.

The *Maſque of Alfred*, written in conjunction with MALLET, ſo beautifully compoſed by ARNE, and of which every body knows the ſucceſs, is the laſt of THOMSON's dramatic performances before

GARRICK, who performed in *Tancred and Sigiſmunda* his next play, which circumſtance of courſe lent conſequence to the piece that has been the means of keeping up the reputation it acquired.

THEOBALD—whoſe edition of SHAKESPEAR'S works was preferred to the editions of POPE, WARBURTON, and HANMER, and with reaſon; becauſe, however he might have been "a heavy minded man," it had that ſort of merit for which ADDISON preferred TICKLE'S *Homer* to POPE'S, that is to ſay, more of SHAKESPEAR in it, and indeed more honeſt inclination to do juſtice to the ſubject it treated, has very little elſe to be remembered by. He wrote eighteen dramatic pieces of one deſcription or other which I ſhall now deſcribe. I am ſorry to ſay that juſtice will not let me ſpeak their eulogium.

Electra, 1714, was a mere tranſlation from SOPHOCLES. The *Perſian Princeſs*, 1715, was written, according to the author's account, before he was nineteen. This is one reaſon, perhaps, that it is ſo full of puerility. The *Perfidious Brother*, 1715, is the *Orphan* ſpoilt. Another man, a watch maker of the name of MESTAYER, ſays that THEOBALD ſtole this play from one written by him on the ſame ſubject. *Oedipus, King of Thebes*, is a tranſlation from

SOPHOCLES, with critical notes, and a heavy buſineſs it is. *Plutus*, and The *Clouds*, are of courſe from ARISTOPHANES. None of theſe Greek tragedies and comedies were intended for the ſtage.

Pan and Syrinx was an opera ſet to muſic by GALLIARD, who was a ſprightly compoſer with conſiderable genius. This piece had ſome ſucceſs. In the *Lady's Triumph*, a piece written by S-TTLE, THEOBALD introduced ſome epiſodic parts which were ſet to muſic. *Richard the Second*, altered from SHAKESPEAR, had ſucceſs. Lord ORRERY made THEOBALD a preſent upon this occaſion of a hundred pounds encloſed in a ſnuff box worth 20l. The *Rape of Proſerpine*, *Apollo and Daphne*, and *Harlequin Sorcerer*, were the next productions of this author. Theſe pantomimes are well known, though they do more credit to the machiniſt and muſician than the author; ſome of the muſic of the *Sorcerer*, was compoſed, and in a very fine ſtyle, by Dr. ARNE, the reſt and all that remains of the original is by GALLIARD

The *Double Falſehood*, 1727, THEOBALD endeavoured to palm on the world for a production of SHAKESPEAR, probably becauſe he wiſhed the brat to have a good father. Dr. FARMER ſays it was

by SHIRLEY, and Mr. MALONE gives it to MASSINGER. It is generally however believed to be THEOBALD's, and thus these reports compose a triple falsehood. The proverb of too many cooks spoil the broth was here reversed, for the play had very good success. *Orestes*, 1731. Why this piece is called an opera it is difficult to say; perhaps because the subject is romantic, and it is interspersed with a little music. It is a strange thing and the public were of that opinion. The *Fatal Secret* was known to every body before it came out, for it is stolen from WEBSTER's *Duchess of Malfy*. *Orpheus and Euridice* is the famous pantomime under that title. The *Happy Captive* is the last of THEOBALD's pieces and intended to ridicule the Italian opera. It is however so ridiculous itself that it recoiled and wounded its author.

SAVAGE, whose strange turbulent life has been so laboriously written by Dr. JOHNSON, had however very little either in that or his writings to command public applause. If he had an unnatural mother, he was himself unnatural and ungrateful towards all his brothers and sisters of creation, for he never enjoyed the bounty or friendship of any individual whom he did not offend and incense, which is so well known by those who have read the long ca-

talogue of his ſtrange viciſſitudes that it is unneceſſary if it were not impoſſible to go into it here.

SAVAGE's dramatic works are *Love in a Veil*, a comedy, and *Sir Thomas Overbury*, a tragedy. The firſt, though brought out under the advantage of the kindeſt attention from WILKS and STEELE, which he returned as uſual with ingratitude, had no ſucceſs; the other was ſparingly praiſed. It yielded altogether from the theatre and the preſs ſome ſay two hundred pound, ſome only one.

LILLO, the celebrated author of *George Barnwell*, was an original Engliſh writer of great merit. It is impoſſible to deny that domeſtic ſubjects are beſt treated in natural and unaffected language, and derive moſt pathos and intereſt from forcible proſe than meaſured blank verſe. The heart knows nothing of heroics; it cannot feign; it cannot be depreſſed, ſhocked, or torne, raiſed, intereſted, or delighted, ſo well by any language as that which utter ideas expreſſive of naked and inſtant conception. All ſublimity is ſimple; and, if no author has hit it oftner than SHAKESPEAR, it is becauſe his verſe has all the force and fidelity of proſe.

LILLO's firſt piece was *Silvia, or the Country*

Burial. It was an opera, and was performed in 1731, at which time nothing of this deſcription could poſſibly ſucceed owing to the great reputation of the *Beggar's Opera.* It muſt be confeſſed that its own fair pretenſions to public favour were very ſlender.

George Barnwell is ſo well known that it is difficult to make any addition to what has been already ſaid of it. Dr. JOHNSON has declared that "he "ſcarcely thinks a tragedy in proſe dramatic; that "it is difficult for performers to ſpeak it; that the "loweſt when impaſſioned raiſe their language," I think he had better have ſaid their voices, for as to their language I believe upon ſuch occaſions it is lowered even to blackguardiſm, "and that the "writing of proſe is generally the plea or excuſe "of poverty of genius,"

LILLO has very plainly given the lie to all this in *George Barnwell,* a play that would have loſt all its pathos had it been in blank verſe; and this fact is ſo ſtrongly proved that, if it had not boaſted ſterling and valuable merit to a moſt uncommon degree, it muſt have ſunk under the weight of that calumny which was intended to cruſh it; but ſays an author thoſe auditors who brought with them the

old ballad, from which the play was taken, with a view to ridicule and decry it, were at length obliged to drop their ballads and pull out their handkerchiefs.

The *Chriſtian Hero* is taken from SCANDERBEG and is by no means a proper ſubject either for the ſtage or for LILLO. *Fatal Curioſity* is however proper for both, for it is certainly very intereſting and admirably well treated. There is a mixture of horror and tenderneſs in it which in a very uncommon degree penetrate the heart. The ſtory, though the circumſtance really happened, is extremely novel, and the moral is grand and commanding. There ſeems nothing againſt its ſucceſs, were it to be revived, but its length, for it is in three acts, and even a good author would tremble at an attempt to extend it to five. *Marina*, a play of three acts, is taken from PERICLES. *Britannia* is a maſque written on the marriage of the Princeſs of ORANGE and the Princeſs Royal.

Elmeric was a poſthumous work of LILLO. It did no particular credit to his reputation. *Arden of Feverſham* was left in an imperfect ſtate, but it was finiſhed by Dr. HOADLY, and brought out with ſucceſs in 1759. This play is written upon the

old ſtory from which a tragedy had before been made. It was falſely imputed to SHAKESPEAR, and introduced by the following title. *The lamentable and true tragedie of M. Arden of Feverſham, in Kent. who was moſt wickedlye murdered by the means of his diſloyall and wanton wife; who, for the love ſhe bare for one Moſbie, hyred two deſperate ruffins, Blackwill and Shagbag, to kill him.*

CHARLES SHADWELL, nephew, or as ſome ſay ſon, to the laureat whom DRYDEN has immortalized by his *Mac Flecknoe*, enjoyed ſome public poſt in IRELAND, and wrote ſeven dramatic productions, all which, except one, The *Fair Quaker of Deal*, an account of which and Miſs SANTLOW's celebrity we have ſeen, were performed on the Iriſh ſtage. They were called The *Humours of the Army*, The *Haſty Wedding*, *Sham Prince*, *Rotheric O'Connor*, *Plotting Lovers*, and *Iriſh Hoſpitality*. In all theſe pieces SHADWELL has ſtudied DANCOURT, taking up ſuch ſlight flimzy circumſtances as might form temporary exhibitions. The *Humours of the Army* is exactly *Les Curieux de Compeigne*.

TAVERNER was a name a good deal diſtinguiſhed in various branches of the arts. The preſent object of our notice practiſed the civil law in Doctor's

Commons, and painted and wrote plays for his amuſement, and certainly in no mean degree for the amuſement of the public. He, however, painted better than he wrote. The titles of his plays are The *Faithful Bride of Grenada*, The *Maid the Miſtreſs*, The *Female Advocates*, The *Artful Huſband*, The *Artful Wife*, and *'Tis Well if it Takes*.

SWINEY, whoſe hiſtory has been already pretty well traced, wrote The *Quacks*, *Camilla*, and *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*. The firſt is a poor farce and the others were done in quality of Operatical Manager. WARD was a whimſical fellow of ſtrong natural parts; who, finding that he could breathe no atmoſphere but that of an alehouſe, reſolved to keep one himſelf. He was by no means a bad writer, and was diſtinguiſhed by a mock heroic poem in the ſtyle of Hudibras, called The *Reformation*. His dramatic pieces are *Honeſty in Diſtreſs*, The *Humours of a Coffee Houſe*, and The *Priſoner's Opera*. There was another WARD who wrote The *Happy Lovers*, The *Petticoat Plotter*, and The *Widow's Wiſh*.

PHILIPS, who was one of the ſatelites that moved about ADDISON, and whoſe *Sappho* is thought by ſome to be worth all the reſt of his works, his paſto-

rals and his tragedy included, even though he is supposed to be greatly indebted to his friends for their assistance in it, and whose *Namby Pamby* is said by a great man to have delighted all ranks, from a WALPOLE, the steerer of the helm, to Miss PULTENEY in her nursery, wrote for the stage The *Distressed Mother*, The *Briton*, and *Humphrey Duke of Gloucester*.

The *Distressed Mother* is completely from the *Andromacque* of RACINE. It was puffed into reputation by ADDISON and all his friends, and certainly has a degree of merit. The perpetual seesaw however of interest being divided between four characters, who relieve one another like centinels, or buckets in a well, is intolerably tedious. I once saw it acted by four performers, each of whom had a different lisp. The *Briton* was brought out in 1721. It was well received, but has been ever since neglected. *Humphrey*, as good a designation of a Briton as the other, was not so well received.

OZEL was little more than an industrious translator. His pieces are principally translations from MOLIERE, whose whole works he has given the public, CORNEILLE, RACINE, and others; and, as he thus occupied himself for amusement rather than emolument, being employed in business very

lucratively and reſpectably, his pieces were little adapted for the ſtage.

CAREY, the well known writer of ſeveral farces which occaſionally are now revived with pleaſure, was by profeſſion a muſician. He had ſome genius but little taſte. There is ſcarcely any thing of his however but has ſomething like merit, though not actually the thing itſelf. Sir JOHN HAWKINS has impartially and rather generouſly deſcribed his character. "As a muſician," ſays he, "CAREY ſeems "to have been the firſt of the loweſt rank; and as "a poet the laſt of that claſs of which DURFEY was "the firſt, with this difference, that in all the ſongs "written on love, wine, and ſuch kind of ſubjects, "he ſeems to have manifeſted an inviolable regard "for decency and good manners." The author before me finiſhes an account of his hiſtory with theſe words. "He led a life free from reproach "and hanged himſelf October 4th, 1743."

Hanging and Marriage was never acted. The *Contrivances* has been acted and very frequently with conſiderable ſucceſs. Every body knows that *Arethuſa* uſed to be the probationary part of female fingers before they were bold enough to venture upon characters of more conſequence, a mode of

conduct which would be more ſerviceable to the ſtage than beginning as is uſual now, with ſtepping on the top round of the ladder, a circumſtance that precludes aſſcenſion and may produce a fall. *Amelia* after the Italian manner, and produced at the French theatre had no great merit. Here we begin to ſee the extent of CAREY's muſical abilities; for, whenever the limits of the poetry exceeded mere trifles he was obliged to call in aſſiſtance, LAMPE, a man of conſiderable merit, compoſed this opera. *Teraminta* was a piece of the ſame deſcription; the muſic was compoſed by SMITH. I very much ſuſpect that CAREY could do little more than invent a melody and get ſome other perſon to tranſmit his ideas from his mind to paper, or at leaſt the arrangement of it; not ſo bad but ſomething like the lady compoſers of the preſent day, and indeed the gentlemen too in ſome caſes.

Chrononhotonthologos is a well known burleſque in which there are many paſſages that ſucceſsfully ridicule inflated and bombaſtic writing. The idea of the warrior's piling himſelf upon dead bodies till he reached the gods, who invited him for his heroiſm to remain with them, which offer he rejected becauſe he was ſummoned to earth by the eyes of his miſtreſs, is very happy. The *Honeſt Yorkſhireman* is a true

Engliſh farce and has much pleaſantry. The parts of the muſic, which are not ſelected, came very properly within the reach of CAREY's muſical genius.

The *Dragon of Wantley* has frequently given pleaſure on the ſtage. It is much more the right ſort of burleſque on Italian operas than the generality of pieces written upon that principle. The terror excited in the old ballad by the dragon and the ſuperiority of MOORE, of Moorehall, to either Hercules or St. George, are admirable materials for the purpoſe, "for," ſays the ballad, ſpeaking of Hercules and the Dragon of Lerna,

"He had a club
"His dragon to drub,
"Or he never had don't I warrant ye;
"But MOORE of Moorehall,
"With nothing at all,
"Soon ſlew the Dragon of Wantley."

Margery, the ſequel to the Dragon, is unfortunate, as indeed are ſequels in general. *Betty, or the Country Bumpkin*, was not ſucceſsful, but *Nancy, or the Parting Lovers*, is a happy trifle, and has always had ſucceſs. The ſong of "And can'ſt thou "leave thy Nancy," ſhews that CAREY's mind was

muſical. There is more genius in it than in many a laboured fugue.

BULLOCK, ſon to the celebrated actor of that name, was himſelf an actor and a dramatic writer; but he fell ſhort of his father in one profeſſion, and of his cotemporaries in the other. His pieces are as follows: *Woman's Revenge*, a comedy, 1715, is a filtration of BETTERTON's *Match in Newgate*, which he had filtrated from MARSTON's *Dutch Courtezan*; The *Slip* merits its name for it is no more than a cion from MIDDLETON's *Mad World my Maſters*. *Adventures of Half an Hour* was ſcarcely ſuffered by the audience half that time. The *Cobler of Preſton* we have already ſeen an account of in the article, *Charles Johnſon*.

The *Perjuror* is a very poor thing. It ſeems intended to reprobate the conſtant breach of official oaths, and to ſtrike at trading juſtices, conſtables, and their underſtrappers; but ſuch characters are too callous to be hurt by ſo tiny a club. BULLOCK ſeems to have acted the Hercules with a ſwitch in his hand. *Woman's a Riddle* was claimed by SAVAGE and brought out by BULLOCK, but is nothing more than a tranſlation of a Spaniſh play by a lady. The *Traytor*, 1718. If BULLOCK's attempts in comedy

were ſo ineffectual, this ſingle effort of tragedy muſt be of courſe ten times worſe. This *Traytor*, which has been alſo attributed to SHIRLEY and to RIVERS, betrayed BULLOCK into the folly of confirming the town in their opinion that he had very poor pretenſions as a dramatic writer.

THEOPHILUS CIBBER, whoſe variegated and complicate hiſtory was as ſcandalous, and would have been as noticeable, as that of SAVAGE, if he had been born with as much genius, who was forward in all manner of theatrical ſchiſms, and got into all manner of ſcrapes, who has been conſidered by GOLDSMITH and others to have fortunately eſcaped hanging by being drowned, who, in ſhort, was a conſtant impoſition in every thing he ſaid and did, all which is attributed by an author to his having been born on the day of the moſt memorable ſtorm ever known in this kingdom, which happened November 26th, 1703, brought out, for we cannot ſay he wrote, ſix dramatic pieces *.

* T. CIBBER was allowed by the world to claim ſome ſhare of reputation from the work, publiſhed in five volumes, and called *Cibber's Lives of the Poets*, but JOHNSON upon indubitable authority, no leſs than having the original manuſcript in his poſſeſſion, inſiſts that CIBBER had no hand in it whatever, for that it was the work of ROBERT SHIELS, a native of Scotland, to whom he pays ſome

Henry the Sixth, a miſerable alteration of SHAKESPEAR's play, was performed only in the ſummer and received very little applauſe, but yet more than it merited. The *Lover*, which play he dedicated to his wife, whoſe acting gave it the little celebrity it obtained, was a flimzy piece full of common place and puerility. *Patie and Peggy*, is ALLEN RAMSEY's *Gentle Shepherd* reduced to one act. CIBBER boaſts that he atchieved this mighty taſk in one day, which he might eaſily do, pen and ink being totally out of the queſtion, and nothing more being neceſſary for the labour of this memorable playwright than paſte and a pair of ſciſſars. The *Harlot's Progreſs* was an obſcene thing which was deſervedly

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handſome complimeuts. There is one matter rather irreconcileable in this account, for JOHNSON ſays that this work was never ſeen by either of the CIBBERS, and yet he informs the reader that CIBBER betrayed the name of the author for ten guineas. This is a curious circumſtance altogether. CIBBER publiſhed the work as his own; he muſt, therefore, not only have ſeen it but have purchaſed it of SHIELS, and a promiſe of ſecrecy along with it, which ſecrecy muſt have been kept by SHIELS inviolably till his death, which happened, as JOHNSON tells us, juſt after the work was publiſhed. How came JOHNSON to know this fact? Does he mean to ſay it was to him that CIBBER betrayed the ſecret for ten guineas? Or, what is more unlikely, did he know SHIELS and his hand writing? And by that means was able to aſcertain that the manuſcript in his poſſeſſion was written by SHIELS? Really this bare aſſertion, contradicting itſelf ſo many ways, is very queſtionable.

hiſſed. *Romeo and Juliet.* If any thing could revolt the town, I think it muſt have been to ſee an attempt to improve SHAKESPEAR by THEOPHILUS CIBBER. The *Auction* was an interlude ſtolen from FIELDING's *Hiſtorical Regiſter.*

COFFEY, an Iriſhman, who was poſſeſſed of an inexhauſtable fund of that humour that diſtinguiſhes the low Iriſh, who had a knack of patching up old plays and farces, and who performed Æſop for his benefit merely becauſe he was deformed, for he was an execrable actor, brought out *Southwark Fair*, a droll, taken from an old play, The *Beggar's Wedding*, made up from the *Jovial Crew* and other things, *Phœbe*, the ſame piece cut into a farce, The *Female Parſon*, which was damned the firſt night, The *Devil to Pay, or the Wives Metamorphoſed*, a well known and juſtly admired farce, not however written by COFFEY but metamorphoſed by him, MOTTLEY, the two CIBBERS, and others, from SHADWELL's *Devil of a Wife*, The *Boarding School*, taken from a miſerable play of DURFEY, The *Merry Cobler*, a ſequel to the *Devil to Pay*, and damned the firſt night, and The *Devil upon two Sticks*, ſtolen from an indifferent play written by one GWINNET.

MOTTLEY derived more conſideration from his

being a man of family, and ſome fortune, than by his dramatic efforts. The *Imperial Captives*, a tragedy, 1720, merely a paſſable production, was performed for a few nights with that negative ſort of ſucceſs which to an author of any ſpirit, is more than a poſitive damnation. *Antiochus* is founded on the ſtrange improbable, or if probable the unnatural ſtory of Seleucas Nicanor, who gave up his wife Stratonice to his ſon Antiochus, who was dying for love of her. That folly which is a ſatire on the paſſions inſtead of a compliment to them ought not to be made a ſubject of the drama. This would be a good theme for KOTZEBUE.

Penelope, 1728. This is a burleſque of HOMER's *Odyſſey*. MOTTLEY was aſſiſted in it by COOKE. It was intended, or ſuppoſed to be ſo by POPE, as a ſatire upon his *Homer*, and therefore COOKE is crammed into the notes in the *Dunciad*. The *Craftſman* is only a poor ſatire on a newſpaper under that title. *Widow Bewitched.* This was the beſt of MOTTLEY's plays, and had the beſt ſucceſs; but "the wicked compared with the more wicked ſeem "lovely."

GRIFFIN was an author and an actor. He brought out *Injured Virtue*, a tragedy, 1715, merely altered from MASSINGER and DECKER. *Love in a*

Sack, a poor farce; *Humours of Purgatory*, taken from the comic part of SOUTHERN's *Fatal Marriage*, The *Masquerade*, a thing that had temporary success. and *Whig and Tory*, which had no success at all.

The remainder of those authors before GARRICK, I shall take in a summary way. HUNT wrote The *Fall of Tarquin*, a most wretched piece, says my intelligence. JACOB was author of The *Poetical Register*, and produced *Love in a Wood*, a farce never performed, and The *Soldier's Last Stake*. This he informs his readers was ready for the stage which of course was not ready to receive it, for it never made its appearance. Sir HILDIBRAND JACOB, who wrote poems and other publications, produced The *Fatal Constancy*, a tragedy, 1723, performed with applause enough to encourage its author to go on, just as we are tempted to play after winning the first stakes. The *Nest of Plays* was three comedies in one. It was damned the first night, some say because it had no merit, and others because it was the first play brought out after the Licensing Act; the last reason seems nonsence.

Mrs HAYWOOD, a most whimsical writer, who seemed determined to prove that women cannot not only talk faster but write faster than men, whose novels, essays, and other productions of a similar

kind, take up nineteen volumes, who took Mrs. MANLEY for her model, whoſe indecency ſo offended POPE that he clapt her up in the *Dunciad*, and who is defended by her biographer becauſe, though ſhe wrote indecently at firſt, ſhe wrote delicately afterwards, from which this charitable advocate ſuppoſes that ſhe was gallant in the early part of her life and afterwards reformed—wrote four dramatic pieces, *Fair Captive*, *Wife to Let*, *Frederick Duke of Brunſwick*, and *Opera of Operas*, which the ſame gentleman confeſſes were but indifferent. The firſt was not written by her but by Captain HURST, the ſecond did not ſucceed, though the lady attempted the principal part, the third was damned, and the fourth was FIELDING's *Tom Thumb* ſet to muſic.

SAMUEL JOHNSON, not the lexicographer, but the author of *Hurlothrumbo*, got ſome reputation by affecting ſingularity; a trick that has too often impoſed upon the public. He wrote alſo *Cheſhire Comics*, The *Blazing Comet*, and *All alive and Merry*. Theſe pieces were all repreſented at the Haymarket. The rage for *Hurlothrumbo* was a diſgrace to the public, for the audience were fairly laughed at all through the piece.

The author honeſtly tells them that they will find

it full of madneſs and extravagance, fine thoughts, and unintelligible fuſtian and fiction; and thus goes on in a mixed ſtyle between the *Euphuiſm* of LYLLY, and the *Viſions* of RABELAIS, performing the principal character himſelf, and confeſſing that it is impoſſible for them to underſtand him, owing to their not taſting the different ſentiments as he did when he compoſed the piece, by ſometimes playing on a fiddle, and ſometimes walking in ſtilts.

How ſuch incomprehenſible ſtupidity could have been followed with the inſatiable avidity it was, challenges aſtoniſhment. The fact however is indubitable. All the world flocked to hear this rhapſodical nonſenſe. A ſet of ſmarts formed themſelves into what they called the Hurlothrumbo Society, nay, it is ſaid that Sir ROBERT WALPOLE encouraged this infatuation to amuſe the people while ſome ſtate ſecrets were getting properly ripe for diſcovery.

ESTCOURT, of whom I have already ſpoken of as an actor, brought out The *Fair Example*, a comedy, and *Prunella*, an interlude; neither of which claim much rank as dramatic pieces. SMITH wrote *Phædra and Hyppolitus*, 1707. This play was performed but three nights, which doctor JOHNSON accounts for by ſaying that it pleaſed the critics and the critics only; 'tis true that ADDISON ſays the

neglect of it was disgraceful to the nation; but Addison always lavished praises on those writers from whose abilities he had nothing to fear.

Fyfe, an obscure author, wrote The *Royal Martyr, King Charles the First.* Governor Hunter, who took two thousand Palatines to settle at New York, and who was at different times governor of New York, Virginia, the Jerseys, and Jamaica, wrote a thing distinguished as a biographical farce, called *Androborus.* Lord Blessington wrote a contemptible farce called The *Lost Princess.* Charles, Lord Orrery, was the author of an unsuccessful comedy, the prologue by Lord Lansdown, called *As you find It.* Dr. King, known by his siding with Sacheveral, by having a hand in the *Examiner*, by writing The *Art of Love*, and The *Art of Cookery*, produced a tragi-comedy called *Joan of Headington.* Grimes, who was a schoolmaster, and famous for exciting insurrections among his boys, wrote a thing which he called an *Opera alluding to Peace.*

The famous Puppet Shew Powell, rival of the Italian opera, produced a mock performance called *Venus and Adonis.* Jackson translated *Ajax* from Sophocles. Blanch wrote three pieces, which

were however not performed; they were called The *Beau Merchant*, *Swords into Anchors*, and *Hoops into Spinning Wheels*. HAMILTON wrote two miſerable things called *Doating Lovers*, and The *Petticoat Plotter*; the laſt of which, however, in conſequence of the author's intereſt, who was related to the Duke of HAMILTON, procured him a handſome benefit at advanced prices.

MOLLOY, who was a ſtaunch advocate for government, and therefore, ſays my author, was neglected by miniſtry, wrote The *Perplexed Couple*, The *Coquette*, and The *Half Pay Officers*, neither of which met with any great ſucceſs ſays the ſame author, although in one of them an old woman of eighty-five, called PEG FRYER, played a part and danced a jig. Three pieces called The *Earl of Mar marred*, The *Pretender's Flight*, and The *Inquiſition*, are attributed to an author of the name of JOHN PHILIPS, though very uncertain accounts are given of either this author, or theſe plays. KNIPE wrote a farce called The *City Ramble*.

BRERETON, a major in the army, in two pieces he produced, imitated RACINE's *Eſther*, and CORNEILLE's *Polieucte*. BOOTH, the actor, wrote an opera called The *Death of Dido*, which was com-

poſed by PEPUSCHE. Mrs. DAVYS, an Iriſhwoman, and the keeper of a coffee houſe, wrote The *Northern Heireſs*, and The *Self Rival*; one only of theſe pieces was performed and that had but very indifferent ſucceſs. LEVERIDGE, the ſinger, wrote *Pyramus and Thiſbe*. BREVAL wrote The *Confederates*, and the *Play is the Plot*, from which pieces were taken, The *Strollers*, and the *Rape of Helen*. The *Confederates* is a ſatire on *Three Hours after Marriage*, which BREVAL publiſhed under the aſſumed name of JOSEPH GAY. This was provocation enough for POPE; who, inſtantly introduced BREVAL into the *Dunciad*. WEAVER was a dancing maſter, and a dramatic poet, a coalion of extremities in talents rather rare; the head and the heels ſeldom having any thing to do with each other in the way of genius. Theſe pieces are a ſort of pantomimes and are called *Mars and Venus*, *Orpheus and Euridice*, *Perſius and Andromeda*, aud The *Judgment of Paris*.

BECKINGHAM, who was repreſented as a ſoldier and nothing more, wrote *Scipio Africanus*, and *Henry the Fourth of France*; two pieces correctly regular and therefore inſufferably dull. BROWN produced a ſtupid farce called The *Two Harlequins*, from the French of LE NOBLE. Sir THOMAS MOORE

brought out a tragedy full of the abſurdities of *Hurlothrumbo* without its genius, called *Manjora*. It is impoſſible to avoid ſelecting the following paſſages by way of giving an idea of the bombaſt that ignorant authors fancy they may foiſt upon the town with impunity. In one part of the play, the King ſays,

By all the ancient gods of Rome and Greece,
I love my daughter better than my niece;
If any one ſhould aſk the reaſon why,
I'll tell 'em nature makes the ſtrongeſt tie.

In another,

Call up my guards, call 'em up every one,
If you don't call all, you may as well call none.

Dr. SMITH. Of this gentleman a circumſtance is related which does the higheſt honour to the feelings and friendſhip of WILKS the actor. SMITH was deſigned for the church; but finding it impoſſible to become an orator from an impediment in his ſpeech, he was determined to turn his thoughts to ſome other profeſſion; and, upon conſidering the matter every way, he at laſt thought phyſic the beſt choice he could poſſibly make. To furniſh himſelf with the means of proſecuting his ſtudies, he wrote a play, called The *Captive Princeſs*. It was refuſed by the actors; but WILKS, entering into the ſpirit

of SMITH's intention, and greatly approving the good ſenſe of his plan, offered him a benefit for it, which he rendered ſo profitable, that it enabled his friend to enter himſelf at LEYDEN, where he applied to the ſtudy of phyſic ſo diligently that doctor BOERHAAVE recommended him to the Czarina, who made him one of the phyſicians of the Ruſſian court. *

TOLSON, who was a clergyman, and by his irregularities begat a ſuſpicion that he had murdered a child, the conſequence of an illicit amour with a young lady of diſtinction, and who afterwards became chaplain to the earl of SUSSEX, and was protected by lady LONGUEVILLE, produced The *Earl of Warrick*, T. KILLIGREW, of the old ſtock of his name. who was gentleman of the bed chamber to GEORGE the ſecond when he was prince of

* WILKS received a letter frnm SMITH after he was eſtabliſhed in RUSSIA, in which he ſpeaks of his ſituation, and gives him advice of furs and other preſents which he had ſent him. To ſhew how much he was obliged to WILKS, and how gratefully he felt towards him I ſhall quote the latter part of his letter—"But who gave me "theſe furs? This affluence? This royal miſtreſs? this happy ſitua- "tion? A man juſt of your age and ſtature. If you can't find him "out, aſk my dear and worthy friend Sir Harry Wildair, and tell "him at the ſame time the grain was his; and the reaper, with the "crop, ſhall ever be at his command."

WALES, wrote a trifle called *Chit Chat.* CROXALL, of whom there is nothing remarkable but his being a ſtaunch whig, wrote a dramatic performance, which is however nothing more than a verſion of SOLOMON's Song, called The *Fair Circaſſian.*

CHETWOOD, who was many years prompter of Drury Lane, and to whoſe anecdotes relative to theatres and actors all thoſe who have written on the ſubject of the Stage have been materially indebted, wrote The *Stock Jobbers*, intended as well as another farce of this author, to expoſe the South Sea mania. The *Lover's Opera*, a piece which had but little ſucceſs, and The *Generous Free Maſon*, a trifle only intended for Bartholomew Fair. LEIGH, an inferior actor, wrote *Kenſington Gardens*, and *Hob's Wedding*, to ſhew one would think that he was an indifferent writer as he was an actor; the latter was a continuation of DOGGET's *Country Wake.*

ODELL, who had been patronized by lord WARTON, and who loſt firſt an eſtate in the court intereſt, but afterwards obtained a penſion, erected a theatre in Goodman's Field's, as we have already ſeen, and afterwards ceded his intereſt to GIFFARD. He is thought however to have made the theatre afterwards aſſiſt his fortune; for, ſoon after the buſi-

neſs of The *Golden Rump*, and the accompliſhment of the Licencing Act, he was made Deputy Maſter of the Revels under the duke of GRAFTON, which place he held to his death. He produced for the ſtage, *Chimera*, a temporary thing on the South Sea bubble, The *Patron*, performed with very little ſucceſs, The *Smugglers*, a farce better received, and The *Prodigal*, a comedy which is little more than an alteration of SHADWELL's *Woman Captain*

MITCHEL, called ſir ROBERT WALPOLE's poet, and who was famous, like SAVAGE, for companionable qualities and diſſipation, wrote only a piece, of ſome merit, called The *Highland Fair*, for The *Fatal Extravagance*, which is attributed to him, was written by AARON HILL to do him a pecuniary kindneſs. CONCANEN, who was attorney general of JAMAICA, and wrote ſome poems, produced a thing in imitation of *Tunbridge Wells and Epſom Wells.* It was called *Wexford Wells.* Two BELLAMY's huſband and ſon to a lady who kept a boarding ſchool at Chelſea, wrote between them eight pieces merely for the ſcholars. They are principally tranſlations from GUARINI and others. STURMY, who is but little known, wrote *Love and Duty*, The *Compromiſe*, and *Seſoſtris.* Theſe pieces are ſaid to be ill written but they afforded ſome hints to other

writers. *Sefoſtris* in particular is ſuppoſed to have furniſhed VOLTAIRE with materials for his *Merope*, which is poſſible; though, as GILBERT in 1643, CHAPELLE in 1683, and LE GRANGE in 1691, had treated this ſubject; it is more likely not only that VOLTAIRE borrowed from his own countrymen, but that STURMY reſorted to the ſame ſource.

DUNCOMBE tranſlated RACINE's *Athaliah*, and wrote *Junius Brutus*. He is only known by being related by marriage to HUGHES. STERLING was one of the aſſociates of MITCHELL; but he reformed, and took orders. He wrote the *Rival Generals*, and the *Parricide*, neither of which are particularly noticed by any writer. PITCAIRNE, intended for the church, and afterwards eminent as a phyſician, wrote a comedy called The *Aſſembly*, as we are told; but, as the invidious and unhandſome abuſe, of which this piece is full, does not by any means characterize the mind or talents of this great man, the authenticity of his being the author of it is very queſtionable.

FENTON who experienced various fortune, who tranſlated ſeveral books of HOMER's *Odyſſey* publiſhed by POPE, and was requited by a ſmall gratuity and a ſtolen epitaph, wrote a tragedy upon the

well known subject of *Mariamne*. It came out in 1723, and was the means of raising the reputation of the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. SOUTHERN is said to have assisted FENTON. CIBBER had no opinion of the play which fact, has been told to his prejudice. The town and CIBBER certainly did not think alike for FENTON got a thousand pounds for his trouble.

The celebrated ALLAN RAMSAY, besides The *Gentle Shepherd*, which has at various times been performed with much reputation, brought out a complimentary piece called The *Nuptials*. ROBE produced The *Fatal Legacy*. WILLIAMS brought out a local performance called *Richmond Wells*. HOWLING promised to produce four pieces of which we are furnished with the titles; but I fancy nobody ever saw the plays themselves. LOVET, one of MITCHELL's intimates, wrote The *Bastard*. THURMOND was the son of the actor of that name, and produced five pantomimic operas called *Harlequin Shepherd*, *Apollo and Daphne*, *Harlequin Dr. Faustus*, another *Apollo and Daphne*, and *Harlequin's Triumph*, none of these have any relation to THEOBALD's pantomimes. SANDFORD wrote The *Female Fop*.

COOKE at nineteen gave the world an edition of

Andrew Marvel, and afterwards other productions, through which he ſtands upon good ground as a ſcholar. This reputation he has however thrown down by his dramatic writings which are *Albion*, *Battle of the Poets*, The *Triumph of Love and Honour*, The *Eunuch*, from TERENCE of courſe, The *Mournful Nuptials*, *Love the Cauſe and the Cure of Grief*, and *Amphytrion* from PLAUTUS. H. JOHNSON tranſlated *Romulus* from De la MOTTE. JEFFREYS wrote three pieces publiſhed together called *Edwin*, *Merope*, and The *Triumph of Truth*; the laſt is an oratorio.

Dr. SHERIDAN, the intimate and merry friend of Dr. SWIFT, of whom my lord CORKE ſays "This ill ſtarred, good natured, improvident man "returned to Dublin, unhinged from all favour at "court, and even baniſhed from the caſtle. But "ſtill he remained a punſter, a fidler, and a wit," wrote, or rather tranſlated, *Philoctetes*. HURST wrote the *Roman Maid*. ODINGSELLS became a lunatic, wrote three plays, and hanged himſelf. The coroner's jury might have returned their verdict of lunacy upon the ſtrength of examinting the plays. CAMPBELL is ſaid to have been the author of a play called The *Rover Reclaimed*. WEST, lord chancellor of IRELAND, produced *Hecuba*. He

complains it was not heard out. It was merely a tranſlation from EURIPIDES.

LEWIS wrote a miſerable play called *Philip of Macedon.* It was dedicated to POPE; and according to the dedicator, "read and approved in all its parts "by his diſcerning and conſummate judgment." As it is a vile performance let us hope that POPE read only the dedication. SMYTHE, who was really a man of merit, was unable however to infuſe any of it into his only dramatic piece. It was called The *Rival Modes.* Great expectations were however formed of it; and, while the town was on tiptoe for its appearances a play with much more merit, called The *Diſſembled Wanton*, written by WELSTEAD, was produced, which was undeſervedly neglected. HARRISON, an obſcure writer, produced a play called *Belteſhazzar.*

FROWDE, who was one of ADDISON's ſatelites, wrote The *Fall of Saguntum*, and *Philotas*, both tragedies, which however had no ſucceſs, though they were ſtrongly ſupported both privately and publicly, ASHTON wrote an indifferent play called The *Battle of Aughrim.* WALKER, the original Macheath, wrote The *Quaker's Opera*, and The *Fate of Villany.* BARFORD produced an unſucceſsful piece called

The *Maiden Queen*. Dr. MADDEN wrote *Themiſtocles*; it had ſucceſs. ADAMS tranſlated ſeven plays from SOPHOCLES, and alſo wrote The *Death of Socrates*. RYAN, the actor, wrote The *Cobler's Opera*. LANGFORD, the auctioneer and ſucceſſor to the celebrated Mr. COCK, though very expert at a hammer was very clumſy at a pen; for charmed by his own eloquence, and fancying it would ſucceed if tranſmitted from the pulpit to the ſtage, he produced two pieces called The *Judgment of Paris*, and The *Lover his own Rival*, which were juſt put up and knocked down again.

GATAKER produced The *Jealous Clown*, WETHERBY wrote *Paul the Spaniſh Sharper*. MILLER wrote The *Humours of Oxford*, The *Mother in Law*, The *Man of Taſte*, *Univerſal Paſſion*, The *Coffee Houſe*, *Art and Nature*, *An Hoſpital for Fools*, *Mahomet*, The *Picture*, *Joſeph and his Brethren*, and *Sir Roger De Coverley*; all which, except the firſt, are taken from other writers. MARTYN, nephew to profeſſor MARTYN of Greſham College, wrote *Timolean*. EDWARD PHILLIPS, an author but little known, wrote The *Chambermaid*, a ſqueeze from CHARLES JOHNSON'S *Village Opera*, ſtolen, as we have already ſeen, itſelf; The *Mock Lawyer*, which

had temporary ſucceſs, *Livery Rake and Country Laſs*, ſucceſsful alſo in ſome ſmall degree; *Royal Chace*, the muſic by GALLIARD; and *Britons Strike Home*, which failed. WANDESFORD, in the ſtyle of a gentleman for his amuſemeat, for he amuſed nobody elſe, produced a play called *Fatal Love*.

HATCHET, who was an actor, wrote two indifferent pieces called The *Rival Father*, and The *Chineſe Orphan*. RALPH, from an obſcure origin, rendered himſelf celebrated by his merit and perſeverance. His dramatic pieces are not the beſt of his writings. His *Hiſtory of England* is much eſteemed, and ſo are his political pamphlets. One of his productions dared to point at POPE and his friends, and he was moſt illiberally, and in a ſtrain of malignant falſity, put into the *Dunciad*. His plays are The *Faſhionable Lady*, one of the maſs of operas that generated from the *Beggar's Opera*, The *Fall of the Earl of Eſſex*, altered from BANKS, The *Aſtrologer*, altered from *Albumazor*. This play was performed but one night, and then to twenty one pounds, and revived afterwards with a prologue written by GARRICK, and yet the audience were diſmiſſed. The *Lawyer's Feaſt* was a mere triſle. It however had ſome ſucceſs. TRACY wrote *Periander*, of which we only know that it was privately praiſed and publicly con-

demned. The private applauſe can be accounted for. The author read his tragedy to his friends and on the ſame evening gave them an elegant ſupper, when it was univerſally agreed that, if the play was reliſhed as well as the ſupper it would do.

DRAPER wrote The *Spendthriſt*. There is no trace of the author or his piece, except this poſitive aſſertion. Of GORDON, who wrote a piece called *Lupone*, the accounts are juſt as clear. The Duke of WARTON began a play on the ſubject of *Mary Queen of Scots*. HIPPESLEY, the father of Mrs. GREEN, and the tutor of SHUTER, wrote a piece called *A Journey to Briſtol*. It was merely local. RANDALL wrote The *Diſappointment*, which diſappointed both the author and the public. BELLERS wrote a play called *Injured Innocence*. BODENS, a ſprightly man of faſhion, wrote a comedy called The *Modiſh Couple*, which had little ſucceſs at firſt, and leſs when it was cut down to a farce and performed for Mrs. YATES's benefit in 1760.

KELLY was a member of the Middle Temple Society, and rendered himſelf conſpicuous by the concern he had in a periodical work called The *Univerſal Spectator*. His dramatic pieces are The *Married Philoſopher*, taken of courſe from DES-

TOUCHES, *Timon in Love*, from D'LISLE, a poor tranſlation of a poor play, The *Fall of Bob*, a low farce, The *Levee*, refuſed a licence, and *Pill and Drop*, which was never offered to either licencer or manager. DRURY, an attorney, wrote a farcical ballad opera called The *Devil of a Duke*, The *Mad Captain*, The *Fancied Queen*, and The *Rival Milliners*, which laſt is a burleſque, a ſpecies of writing that cannot be attempted to effect but by men of merit, of which number DRURY unfortunately did not make one. LEDIARD wrote a maſque called *Britannia*. DARCEY produced two pieces in IRELAND; they were called *Love and Ambition*, and The *Orphan of Venice*.

HUGGINS wrote an oratorio on the ſubject of *Judith*. HUMPHRIES wrote an opera called *Ulyſſes*. ASTON, The *Reſtoration of Charles the Second*, which was interdicted. NESBIT brought out at EDINBURGH, *Caledon's Tears*, a piece taken from Chronicles and Records. POTTER produced an opera called *Decoy*, which however was not attractive. BOND wrote The *Tuſcan Treaty*, as we are told by ſome, but others ſay it was written by another gentman, and only reviſed and brought forward by BOND*

* It is more than probable that this is the very BOND of whom

FREEMAN produced a piece called The *Downfall of*

I have already related the anecdote concerning *Zara*. There is a confused account that it was actually AARON HILL's *Zara* which some persons performed at York Buildings a year before it made its appearance at Drury Lane, but it is easy to prove that this is impossible. *Zaire* was produced, in FRANCE, in 1732; the following year BOND, through some influence he had over the manager of Covent Garden theatre, brought out The *Tuscan Treaty*, written by a friend, which was not interesting and therefore did not succeed. In that very year BOND, in the French account, is stated to have been in FRANCE, and so delighted with *Zaire*, that he was determined to get a translation of it for the English Stage, which he was very competent to inspect, though he was no writer, for he had learnt the play by heart, and was such an enthusiast to it that it was continually his practice to repeat the most striking passages in the PARIS coffee houses. Upon his return, as we have seen before, he procured it to be translated, not by AARON HILL, but most likely the author of the *Tuscan Treaty*, and it is also very likely that the managers refused to accept it because it was the labour of a man who had produced an unsuccessful play. This was in 1734. HILL's play came out in 1735, who would hardly have sneaked into York Buildings to get at the opinion of a few individuals when he was always welcome to the voice of the town. Nay it is possible that the treaty of the managers with HILL for his translation was a reason why they refused the play from BOND. At any rate the historians seem to be wholly in the dark as to the real history of BOND, and therefore as it has been their usual practise, when they could not find out the truth; the private translation of *Zara*, they give at once to HILL, whose play was known, talked of, and stipulated for, long before it made its appearance, and who could not have had a doubt of its success at a time when VOLTAIRE's play was in every body's mouth as one of the most popular that ever was produced. In addition to all this I have an account which is corroborated as I understand by the Gentleman's Magazine of *Zara*, translated by a gentleman of the name of JOHNSON, and printed in the year 1735.

Bribery. Downs, not the promptor, brought out a play at Smock Alley, called *All Vows Kept.* Popple wrote The *Lady's Revenge*, and The *Double Deceit.* J. Philips, an indifferent writer, produced *Love and Glory*, and a very poor thing called The *Rival Captains.* Fabian wrote *Trick for Trick.*

Mrs. Charke, whose memoirs in the annals of profligacy make almost as conspicuous a figure as those of Theophilus Cibber, her brother, who, a sort of English D'Eon, amused herself in fencing, shooting, riding races, currying horses, digging in gardens, and playing upon the fiddle, who was at different times an actress, a grocer, an alehouse keeper, a valet de chambre, a sausage seller, and a puppet shew woman, one day in affluence, the next in indigence, now confined in a spunging house, presently released by a subscription of prostitutes, in short one of those disgraces to the community that ought not to be admitted into society, wrote three strange pieces called The *Carnaval*, The *Art of Management*, and *Tit for Tat.* Conolly wrote The *Connoisseur*, intended as a satire, in the style of Shadwell and Foote. Pritchard produced The *Fall of Phaeton*, one of the pantomimical trifles which swarmed about that time. Baillie wrote a piece called The *Patriot.*

HARMAN brought out The *Female Rake*, performed once. HEWITT produced a comedy called *A Tutor for the Beaux*, the bad ſucceſs of which piece did not teach the author prudence, for he brought forward a tragedy which had ſtill leſs merit. LYNCH, wrote The *Independent Patriot*, and CHETWOOD ſays, The *Man of Honour*. Doubt however implies poverty of merit celebrity being the beſt teſt of ſucceſs. To HARPER is given a piece called The *Mock Philoſopher*, and to AYRE, *Aminta* from TASSO, and *Merope* from another Italian author. BROOKES, a clergyman, produced a Chineſe piece called *Tchao Chi Cou Ell.* DAVEY brought out in IRELAND, The *Treacherous Huſband*, BAKER wrote The *Madhouſe*.

NEWTON wrote a trifle called *Alexis's Paradiſe*. BENNET produced another trifle called The *Beau's Adventure*. Mrs. COOPER, another dramatic trifler, wrote the *Rival Widows*, taken probably from St. FOIX, which had ſucceſs through the curious expedient of the lady's performing the principal character on the nights of her benefit. The town allowed her in return to get the uſual emoluments, but after the curtain dropt on the ninth night, it never roſe again to this play. She wrote alſo The *Nobleman*; this piece did not ſucced. WARD, an ac-

tor, publiſhed three pieces called The *Happy Lovers*, The *Petticoat Plotter*, and The *Widow's Wiſh.*

DALTON altered MILTON'S *Comus* for the ſtage, and it muſt be confeſſed very judicouſly, the ſongs, however, are many of them falſely attributed to him, for they were written by LANDSDOWNE, and other cotemporary poets *. DOWER produced The *Salopian Squire*, in which he abuſes the managers in a moſt outrageous manner for not receiving it, charging them with want of taſte and judgment. If he could have looked at the play with impartial eyes, he would have found a better reaſon for their conduct. ROBINSON wrote a poor farce called The *Intriguing Milliners.* Mrs. BOYD, a voluminous reader, who therefore fancied ſhe could write, pro-

* A critic loudly complains that the poetry was ſo little reliſhed with all its incomparable merit that if it had not been for the charms of the muſic, the piece would not have extended to a ſecond night. Had the ſame critic lived to witneſs the performance of *Comus* at the preſent time, he would have alſo to lament that the muſic, ſo highly honourable to genius, and to this country, is gone to ſleep with the poetry; and that, thanks to mutilation and falſe taſte, a combination of the talents of MILTON and ARNE, is now conſidered as an intruſion. I could vote moſt ſincerely that this union of beautiful poetry and exquiſite muſic might be performed at given periods as a condition of the theatrical patent, if it were only as a leſſon to warn the lovers of harmony of their danger in liſtening to falcetto, diviſions, cadences, and cantabiles.

duced two farragoes called *Don Sancho*, and *Minerva's Triumph*. Brown with whom, to the reader's great satisfaction, I shall close my present account of authors, brought out a tragedy called The *Fatal Retirement*, which was deservedly damned *.

Over and above this list of plays for which we have been able to find authors I count a hundred and eighty-five, many of them attributed to individuals, but none of them authentically traced to authors at all; and, now having got rid of materials which it was incumbent on me to produce, but which can have no great claim upon the reader's praise, except that due to accuracy and method, I shall proceed to particulars which will be more interesting, and of course more entertaining both to myself and to those I study to please.

* This play perhaps never would been remembered but by an anecdote relative to Quin, who refused to act in it, and therefore was supposed to have occasioned its failure. In consequence of this he was frequently hissed by the author's friends when he came forward to perform other parts. At length, to put a stop to their importunity, he one evening told the audience that he had read the play before it was performed and given the author his sincere opinion that it was the very worst play he had ever read in his life, and for that reason had refused to act in it, in consequence of this address the audience of course silenced the cabal.

CHAP. IV.

GARRICK.

It is neither within my promiſe nor my inclination to put myſelf forward as the biographer of Garrick. For my own part I think it very immaterial to the fame of a public character to manifeſt much anxiety as to where he was born, at what ſchool he was brought up, and many other particulars which I am not to learn are held ſacredly and indiſpenſibly neceſſary in biography; a reſearch generally however terminating in uncertainty, and diſappointment, and which therefore unfortunately leaves this ſpecies of writing incomplete by the want of one of its attributed unities. As I have had opportunity to urge this before, and, as all thoſe who eſteem merit and genius for their intrinſic value will be naturally more ſolicitous to ſet up their locality than that of the perſon who poſſeſſes them, I ſhall endeavour to gratify theſe by a deſcription of the mental acquiſitions of Garrick, which I had particular op-

portunity of watching for ſeven years through all their ſhades and gradations.

The words that CIBBER applied to BETTERTON, that he was an actor as SHAKESPERR was a poet, may unequivocally be applied to GARRICK, but one ſtrong circumſtanee, which I believe has never been noticed, and which when noticed will be, ſparingly at firſt perhaps, but afterwards generally and literally admitted, ſhews that GARRICK muſt have been nearer in his genius to the comparative merit of SHAKESPEAR than BETTERTON. This circumſtance, which I aſſert without heſitation, is that GARRICK, at any time, on or off the ſtage, alone or in company, about whatever occupation, ſtudy or purſuit, or in ſhort employed in any manner he might, was an actor, a complete actor, and nothing but an actor, exactly as POPE during the whole eourſe of his life was a poet and nothing but a poet.

The acting of GARRICK on the ſtage was to acquire fame and fortune, than which nothing was ever more fairly earned and merited; and off the ſtage, to make that fame and fortune a ſource of reputation, conſequence, and importance, and in this laſt ſpecies of acting he certainly manifeſted more po-

tent merit, more commanding talents, than in the firſt, incomparable as his public acting was. No man exacted homage from all ranks with more ſucceſs than GARRICK. He was a man, as the Iriſh ſay, that you never caught without himſelf.

'Tis true that to attain this ſort of rank with the world the marvellous ſide muſt be perpetually turned outward, and the hidden ſprings and wires muſt be managed with great dexterity and exactneſs to keep up the deception. Any invention, however ingenious in its conſtruction, and wonderful in its operation, would ceaſe to excite admiration if the ſpectator was to diſcover that it worked upon common mechanical principles, and therefore GARRICK, who GOLDSMITH ſeems to have known *au fond.*

" Who threw off his friends, as a huntſman his pack,
" For he knew well enough he could whiſtle them back,"

knew alſo that off the ſtage, as well as on, it was his buſineſs to ſubdue his own paſſions that he might the better ſubdue the paſſions of his ſpectators.

I never ſaw GARRICK either laugh or cry; that is to ſay, ſhed tears, or manifeſt mirth, or even pleaſure, ſpontaniouſly, involuntarily, and from the ſoul,

I have ſeen him taking the hint from SHAKESPEAR, who has certainly well deſcribed real acting by the paſſage, "in a fiction, in a dream of paſſion, force "his ſoul ſo to its conceit that from her working all "his viſage warmed."

> "Tears in his eyes, diſtraction in's aſpect,
> "A broken voice, and his whole function ſuiting
> "With forms to his conceit, and, all for nothing
> "For Hecuba—"

All this and the oppoſite extreme were always at his command *. His laugh was well put on, but it was not a natural laugh of his own. He ſeemed afraid that if he did not conquer a propenſity to riſibility in himſelf, the better to provoke it in his audience, he ſhould like TOM THIMBLE, in the *Rehearſal*, be ſo tickled by the humour of his au-

* GARRICK would indulge ſome few friends—but it was very rare—with what he uſed to call his *rounds*.—This he did by ſtanding behind a chair, and conveying into his face every poſſible kind of paſſion, blending one into the other, and as it were ſhadowing them with a prodigious number of gradations. At one moment you laughed, at another you cried: now he terrified you, and preſently you conceived yourſelf ſomething horrible, he ſeemed ſo terrified at you. Afterwards he drew his features into the appearance of ſuch dignified wiſdom, that MINERVA might have been proud of the portrait; and then—degrading yet admirable tranſition—he became a driveller. In ſhort his face was what he obliged you to fancy it; age, youth, plenty, poverty, every thing it aſſumed.

thor, as not to be able to play his part. In ſhort, no man will deny but that the very eſſence of excellent acting centered in GARRICK, and yet every member of the theatre will vouch for me, that the greateſt and moſt aſtoniſhing effects produced by his acting aroſe from an artful ſuſpenſion of his real feelings, leſt they ſhould provoke him into a ſenſibility which it was his buſineſs to transfer to his auditors.

In acting, the human paſſions would run riot were they not kept in abſolute command. Feeling and ſenſibility are the riches of an actor, and would too ſoon be ſquandered if they were not managed with economy. There are very few ſituations in tragedy, and the great art is how to vary them. A paſſion, like a colour, muſt have a variety of ſhadows; nor will every ſhadow do for the ſame light; and I will even venture to ſay, that a good actor or actreſs ſhould vary the mode of acting, according to the different diſpoſitions of the audiences before whom they appear.

I ſincerely mention this as my real ſentiments on good acting. Every thing on the ſtage muſt be a little elevated. The ſcenes, if they were highly finiſhed, would loſe all their effect. The ſame mode muſt be obſerved in dreſs, and it holds good

throughout every thing elſe. A hero muſt not ſpeak in common proſe—it muſt be meaſured for him into what we call blank verſe. This gives a dignity, an emphaſis to the feeling that is to be expreſſed, and unleſs the actor who repreſents the character can ſo far poſſeſs himſelf with an idea that he is the very hero for the time being, he will never attain perfection as his ſubſtitute.

Theſe requiſites, which GARRICK taught himſelf on the ſtage, he could with the ſame facility transfer to his private conduct; and, whether he condeſcended at his own levee to ſmile at a borrowing actor who was praiſing his poety, cut jokes with BECKET the bookſeller, explain an unintelligible paſſage to PHIL BUTLER the carpenter, blame HOPKINS the prompter for having the gout becauſe he was at the expence of chair hire, rebuke MESSINK the pantomime trick maker for attempting to be witty, like him, chuckle at newſpaper criticiſms that he intended to buy off, or burn cards and letters from dukes, lords, judges, and biſhops, to ſtrike his dependants with awe and admiration—

Whether at court he honoured men of title with the hopes of bolſtering up the reputation of ſome dramatic brat produced with the aſſiſtance of the

chaplain, whether ladies were promiſed that their friends ſhould be diſappointed of boxes that had never been let, or that the new faſhion they laſt produced ſhould be noticed in the next epilogue, or that an epitaph on a favourite parrot ſhould grace the toilette table, or whether he appeared diſtreſſed that he could not be ſet down by an ambaſſador, becauſe he had given a prior promiſe to a counteſs dowager—

Whether at the rehearſal of a piece, his own, he demanded an acknowledgment that every paſſage was the achme of perfection, or at the rehearſal of a piece, not his own, he himſelf allowed praiſe in proportion as he was permitted to make alterations; or, to be brief, in whatever manner by managing not the minds, for many of them were too ponderous for him to wield, but the tempers of men, both of the firſt wordly and profeſſional diſtinction—he ſo played his part as to be courted, carreſſed, admired, and looked up to by rank and talents, with very ſlight pretenſions to the character of eminent abilities himſelf otherwiſe than as an actor.

Garrick profeſſedly ſtudied the character of Cibber, than whom however he poſſeſſed more conſummate abilities except as a writer, but he

blended with this character the eſſence of every other that had been celebrated for acquiring fame by worldly conduct, and poſſeſſed ſo much ſuperraded good ſenſe, that he ſeldom ran into any of their inferior follies, and never into thoſe of any magnitude. He had what he called common ſenſe, to which he gave an unbounded definition, and practically ſhewed that its meaning was to take every advantage within the pale of fair dealing, upon the mart, like a chapman; upon this principle he conducted all his worldly concerns, liberal in offers, and cloſe at a bargain.

By this mode of conduct, though his wiſhes were characterized by boundleſs ambition, he never let them impoſe upon his reaſon, and thus, by never out-ſoaring his ſtrength, he was at no time in danger of falling. GARRICK might have been laureat, he might have had a ſeat in parliament, he might have been knighted, but he knew he could write a prologue better than a birth day ode, that his oratory would have been a poor buſineſs if it had been called upon extemporaneouſly in his own language, and without dreſs and action, and he could anticipate the ridicule of ſeeing againſt the wall the

part of Abel Drugger to be performed by Sir DAVID GARRICK.

All theſe meritorious acts of becoming forbearance ſpoke in him the higheſt degree of good ſenſe, and became the foundation of that general action by which he commanded the attention, the regard, the ſolicitude, and better than theſe, the contributions of mankind. It was this put into practiſe, through the medium of common ſenſe, as we have ſeen it defined, that made him the idol of the great in fortune, and the great in talents; to none of whom he was at any time offenſive, though he always arrogated equality. In ſhort, he was aſtateſman, a lawgiver, a philoſopher, a logician, an architect, a painter, nay a ſcholar and a critic, and even in the opinions of thoſe moſt eminent for theſe diſtinctions, when in fact thoſe ſentiments which he had deliberately collected, and which he ſported through the advantage of a lucky moment, were the ſtudied ideas of others, acted by him.

One of GARRICK'S great ſtrokes of Mundane acting was the fame he was ſo ſolicitous to command abroad, in which he ſo ſucceeded that the French accounts of him in particular, which it is a

pity his biographers had no opportunity of consulting, exalt his merit, excellent as it was, infinitely beyond any thing that we have of him*. It was

* Speaking of his acting, a French author has the following passage. "GARRICK the celebrated English ROSCIUS has alone, perhaps, been capable of conveying all that we have heard or can conceive of the astonishing acting of the ancients. I saw him in LONDON," says the writer, "perform a tyrant who dies on the stage terrified with the enormity of his crimes and torne with remorse. Humanity in the last moments of this tyrant triumphs over his crimes, his murders, and his barbarity. Sensible too late of his villainy, his reflections are his judge and his executioner: overwhelmed with this dreadful conflict he dies piece-meal; his eyes begin to be extinguished, his voice can scarcely articulate his ineffectual penitence; his gestures announce his last moment; nature, yet retains some strength, and, as the human faculties decay and horrible phantoms bring his crimes to his imagination, in his frantic fear he struggles with death and is overcome: he now faintly freezes with horror; he tears up the earth and seems in madening fancy to dig his grave; and now the moment of death arrives, and the convulsive distortion of his face, his quivering lips, the extension of his arms, and a last agonizing sigh, give the finishing stroke to this terrible picture."

In another French writer I find the following anecdote of GARRICK told as a proof that he could not only at will represent all passions but all persons. "A woman of fashion in London," says this writer, "had a great desire to procure the portrait of a nobleman with whom she was in love, but who had a particular aversion to sit for his picture. She prevailed upon GARRICK to notice the face of this lord, and so possess himself of his features that the painter might easily design a faithful likeness through the medium of his borrowed resemblance. This was undertaken; and, after

however, occaſioned ſometimes by rather bold and prodigious flights. A friend might have ſhuddered for him to have been preſent when VOLTAIRE received his Ode on SHAKESPEAR, eſpecially as it happened at the time when that dictator was fretting away his life in his retirement at GENEVA, and fulminating his critical anathemas againſt dunces; but whether he was ſoftened by the preſent that accompanied it, or however he might be wrought upon by that magical perſuaſion which GARRICK ſometimes accorded but never gave, it is certain, for I ſaw it, that the circumſtance produced an acknowledgment full of inſincere praiſe of which GARRICK believed perhaps but very little, but, what was better for him, the world believed the whole.

" having ſtudied every trait and geſture and each poſſible manner " of giving them variety till it was no longer GARRICK, but My " Lord, the painter was ſet to work, and ſo ſucceeded that the por- " trait was univerſally known for the nobleman in queſtion who was " the firſt to expreſs his aſtoniſhment at ſo perfect a likeneſs being " obtained without his knowledge, and who liberally rewarded the " actor and married the lady, in return for her love, and her inge- " nuity." I never heard of this anecdote through any other chan- nel. There is a ſtory told that GARRICK frightened HOGARTH by appearing to him as the ghoſt of FIELDING, whom he ſo reſembled by altering his features that HOGARTH is ſaid never to have recovered the ſhock. It is a ſtrange ſtory however, unleſs GARRICK walked upon ſtilts.

In the performance of all these various parts, one consideration obtruded itself on GARRICK's mind, and operated as a material deduction from the applause so lavishly bestowed on so much professional excellence. This was no less than a continual soreness occasioned by certain flies that perpetually buzzed about him, and never ceased to teaze and torment him till they were suffered to suck their fill and drop off. If he had set out with a firm and resolute determination, the fatal examples of DRYDEN and POPE before him, to have armed himself with indifference, they would have hummed their day and been forgotten; but he wanted strength of mind to take this course. He should have considered that he had not the abilities to resort to *Mac Flecknoes* and *Dunciads*, or even had he been capable of wielding such formidable weapons, they had been already rendered useless by the immaterial beings they had to cope with. Clubs cannot wound atoms.

GARRICK, a better actor in every other respect, though constantly his emulator, unfortunately disdained to copy CIBBER in this; half of whose reputation at least was owing to a steady resolution of disregarding anonymous cavillers, or else coaxing them into some scrape that he might take amost tri-

umphant advantage of them. CIBBER turned the ſatire in the *Dunciad* moſt pointedly againſt POPE, whereas GARRICK would have ſunk under it; but CIBBER was a writer of a different deſcription, far however from being perfect, and this he ſo truly knew and ſo honeſtly acknowledged, that cavil was by him politically deprecated, and the ſhafts of ill nature diſarmed by anticipation.

Had GARRICK given an idea that he went for nothing but a prologue writer, and that his other productions were merely in aid of that experience and dramatic knowledge which as a manager he muſt neceſſarily poſſeſs, the foſtering care of the public would have carreſſed and nurtered theſe offsprings of diffidence, and, having adopted them, have become ſo blind to their foibles that he would have received credit for much more than his fair reputation; whereas, fondly fancying that the world implicitly believed him an author of firſt rate merit, that they would find better poetry in his prologues than in thoſe of DRYDEN, truer character and nature in his plays than in any of his predeceſſors, and more lyric beauty in his *Ode* than in *Alexander's Feaſt*, the world have not come up to his actual deſert, but have ſunk him in every other reſpect, and quietly have ſet him down as a mere prologue

writer; which as the ſubjects of his prologues and epilogues were merely temporary and a laugh at ſome prevailing folly, is every thing but denying him any merit as a writer at all.

Unfortunately this was GARRICK's foible. His writings were his tendon Achilles, which the meereſt witling was at any time Paris enough to find out; and, leſt he feared it would remain undiſcovered, unleſs he himſelf perpetually expoſed it, he unneceſſarily and upon every trivial occaſion bared it to view; till, by ſhewing how he might be wounded, the worſt bungler at critical archery in all Grub-ſtreet, was ſure to hit him.

When he was afraid the wits ſhould be ſatirical on his marriage, he anticipated their ſatire by calling himſelf

"A very Sir JOHN BRUTE all day,
"And FRIBBLE all the night."

When he trembled at what he feared might be the judgment of the critics on his performance of Macbeth, he fooliſhly wrote a pamphlet "on the mimi-"cal behaviour of a certain faſhionable faulty actor." When he dreaded the cenſure and ridicule that he imagined he ſhould be greeted with on his return from a tour to ITALY, he produced the *Sick Monkey*

as a ridicule on what was ſuppoſed to have been his conduct abroad. Theſe are ſome of the inſtances in which his favourite common ſenſe deſerted him.

He imagined that the things would be conſidered as illiberal, and therefore treated them with contempt. There were three riſks in this; firſt, filth generally ſticks, and in this world many want ability, and more inclination to rub it off; ſecondly, in this pretended ſatire it was poſſible that faults might have been expoſed through conſciouſneſs which an indifferent perſon would never have ſuſpected; and laſtly, a diſcovery might have been attended with indelible, becauſe meritorious, ridicule. His conduct was evidently an imitation of Pope in relation to his paſtorals, but Pope had more ability, and his reputation was leſs involved.

Upon an examination of his conduct as it was concerned in thoſe tranſactions that led him to the management of the theatre, which moſt worthily improved it into an extraordinary degree of credit and reputation, his character and genius will more gradually develope than in a ſtudied detail, I ſhall therefore ceaſe to ſpeak of him particularly till I have traced the ſteps by which he aſcended to the higheſt pitch of fame and fortune.

CHAP. V.

STATE OF THE STAGE FROM 1741 TO 1763.

As GARRICK, in imitation of CIBBER, not only looked up from his infancy to the chair of ROSCIUS, which CHURCHILL accorded him after he had poſſeſſed it by univerſal ſuffrage, but alſo to the chair of management, it will be neceſſary to ſhew what a theatrical MACHIAVAL he was in attaining the firſt reputation in both capacities, neither ſituations having been filled at any time with ſuch ability or ſuch credit.

To drop at preſent the merit of GARRICK as an actor, to whom in that capacity I ſhall hereafter pay my tribute of warm and willing admiration, let us ſee with what cautious and wary judgment he conducted himſelf to become a maſter of his profeſſion; and while the account is read by all young actors who emulate his merit, let them at the ſame time emulate his induſtry, his various trials of his thea-

trical powers, his gradual aſcent to ſuperiority, or letthem for ever deſpair of attaining his excellence, or indeed any excellence as actors.

GARRICK knew that the profeſſion he was peculiarly gifted to fill required more variety of requiſites than any other, that there is ſcarcely any accompliſhment the human mind or form is capable of receiving but muſt be ſtudied and learnt by the actor; that conception and memory which are too often conſidered as perfection in the ſcience of acting are only parts of a complicate whole, and that without the poſſeſſion of every one of theſe various qualities, which acquire verſatility, and teach the paſſions a capable ſcope of repreſenting human nature in all its moods and humours, an actor can no more be perfect than a watch without its wheels.

GARRICK knowing this, both by the examples of thoſe actors in the ſchool of BETTERTON, and by his own conſummate keenneſs and foreſight, determined to be ſure of his mark, and that the arrow ſhould go beyond the barb; inſtead, therefore, of riſking a raw and unexperienced genius and venturing crudity and awkwardneſs, he put himſelf to ſchool, and not only learnt practically every thing that experience could give as to the exercise of his

verſatile powers in tragedy and comedy, but he added dancing, fencing, and pantomime, and even ſtudied the character of Harlequin.

Thus his firſt appearance was facination, for it blended all the attraction of novelty with veteran experience. It was uſeleſs, for QUIN to ſay that "it was a faſhion and would ſoon be over. It was "a new religion; that WHITFIELD was followed "for a time, but the people came back again to "church." "It was not hereſy but reformation,", as GARRICK himſelf wittily enough ſaid in reply, and it proved ſo, for the world with one conſent ſtampt it as theatrical orthodoxy.

GARRICK's great ſucceſs, which thinned the other theatres and brought all the world to Goodman's Fields, began very early to prove a ſource of fortune in proportion to the favour he received, which was prodigious. GIFFARD gave him half the profits, and he ſoon of courſe amaſſed a very large ſum, for he performed every night for a conſiderable time. This would have been a ſerious blow at the fame and fortune of the theatres had not an application been intended, though I believe never made, to government, which was backed by the authority of Sir JOHN BARNARD, who in the name of

the city was prepared to revive thoſe objections which we have already ſeen preferred by the magiſtrates, leſt the theatre ſhould be an injury to the members of the commercial part of the town by being immediately ſeated among them.

GARRICK ſeeing plainly how this would operate propoſed to accommodate matters with FLEETWOOD, provided GIFFARD were made a party to the treaty. This was ſoon adjuſted, and he received five hundred a year for his acting, and GIFFARD appears to have been ſatisfied with the emolument allotted him in return for giving up a concern which he held by no legal authority.

GARRICK being now come to Drury Lane, and having in the following ſummer experienced improvement, reputation, and profit by an excurſion to DUBLIN, where he was ſo attended that the vaſt crouding produced a contagious diſorder which was called GARRICK's fever, began to look forward towards the management; and, while FLEETWOOD was ſwindling the tradeſmen and performers, and bribing attornies and bailiffs to keep executions out of the houſe which it was their duty to levy, he fortified himſelf for the occaſion both as to property and friends. He ſaw, however, that the moment

was not arrived for him to ſtep forward, for that the theatre was going ſo faſt to ruin that it would be extremely difficult to have any concern in it without involving his private fortune with the general intereſt of the concern.

He was taught by this an extraordinary contemplation. He could not be inſenſible that, properly applied, the large ſums his performance brought to the theatre might have liquidated, or at leaſt leſſened the demands on the property ſo as to make it in time a clear poſſeſſion to the proprietor; but the reverſe was the fact. The treaſury was the ſieves of the Danaides always full and always empty, and FLEETWOOD plainly ſaw that, by a proper gloſs and a little adroitneſs in legerdemain, hidden by well applied juggling and ſmall talk, the richer he got the more he ſhould perſuade the poor devils who were mortified at his pride, his inſolence, and his want of feeling, but at the ſame time delighted by his good humour, his wit, and his plauſibility, to believe him in neceſſity.

What a ſchool was this for parſimony to a parſimonious man like GARRICK. I never heard that there was any complaint as to his money, indeed it has been thought that GARRICK, MACKLIN, and

another or two, were in a compact with FLEETWOOD that ſo he might laugh at the reſt of the company, covered by their united ſtrength. I ſcarcely know, however, how to give credit to this, becauſe MACKLIN declared in my hearing, and in the preſence of ſeveral gentlemen now living, that it was the buſineſs of the performers to invent all manner of tricks to procure that money which, though their own, they could not obtain by perſuaſion, importunity, or menace, and that he himſelf, who was impowered as acting manager to undertake for the payment of certain articles, and was therefore in ſome ſort amenable, was once under the neceſſity of putting into practiſe a ſtratagem in which he pretended to have broke out of Newgate, where he ſaid he had been put by a creditor, and thereby obtained the ſum he wanted, which he appropriated to his own uſe, it being part of his juſt demand, and afterwards left the creditor to ſue FLEETWOOD.

Certainly ſomehow or other GARRICK found his account in ſtaying at Drury Lane, for Covent Garden was at any time open to him; but he accepted no engagement any where till 1745, at which time, though the publiſhed accounts are againſt me, I think it very probable that FLEETWOOD went to FRANCE, and not in 1747, as it is generally believed, for at

that time the patent was ſold by FLEETWOOD to GREEN and AMBER. bankers in the city, who ſpeculated upon it clogged with a hopeful condition no leſs than that LACEY, who we ſhall preſently ſee as the partner of GARRICK, was to manage the concern.

LACEY had been a ſort of aſſiſtant to RICH, after leaving an unprofitable trade at NORWICH, and becoming a very indifferent actor. The conditions of this purchaſe were that GREEN and AMBER ſhould pay three thouſand two hundred pounds for the patent, and an annuity to FLEETWOOD, till it ſhould be expired, of ſix hundred pounds, and at the ſame time a mortgage of ſeven thouſand pounds on the property was ſuffered to remain, and LACEY for his management was to have a third of the profits. GREEN and AMBER in a very ſhort time became bankrupts, and the patent was put up to public ſale. Whether, therefore, GARRICK foreſaw every one of theſe conſequences and did not chuſe to interfere till a clear and an eaſy purchaſe ſhould preſent itſelf, or perhaps till his intereſt was ſtrengthened by an accumulation of connections, it is equally certain that from the moment of his firſt appearance he had an eye to the management, and that he determined to forbear from engaging in it till it ſhould

be in his power to do ſo without being entangled or embarraſſed.

This is pretty well proved by his conduct previous to his taking the management, which was of a piece with that prior to his commencing actor; for, as he had gone in 1740 to Ipswich to try the effect of his perſonal appearance on the ſtage, ſo, in 1745, he went again to Ireland, in order to feel out what his deportment ought to be as director behind the ſcenes, and even here he proved himſelf an excellent diſcriminator, for he allied himſelf to Mr. Sheridan, a man from whoſe knowledge, judgment, liberality, and rectitude he would not fail to receive every inſtruction neceſſary for his purpoſe.

After attaining this experience Garrick engaged himſelf at Covent Garden during the ſeaſon of 1746, and then in conjunction with Lacey purchaſed the patent, and paid off the mortgage, the whole ſum amounting to twelve thouſand pounds. They alſo continued Fleetwood's annuity, which certainly was not all he got by the bargain; for beſides the three thouſand pounds he received for the patent, very little of which one would ſuppoſe he gave to his creditors, he moſt probably had been for a conſiderable time ſaving out of the fire. I

can myſelf vouch that his ſon, I do not mean the ſon that went to India, but him to whom he left his fortune, lived about four and thirty years ago in a very handſome ſtyle, went to court, and joined in expenſive pleaſures with people of diſtinction.

It is true this fortune was diſſipated in a few years, but it muſt certainly have been ſomething very conſiderable, and as this was at the diſtance of ſixteen or ſeventeen years after the expiration of the patent, when the annuity to FLEETWOOD ceaſed, he muſt have ſaved money, and that not a trifle, excluſively, that is to ſay, out of the earnings of thoſe performers he cajoled, impoſed upon, diſappointed, delighted, and robbed.

The next wonder is how LACEY could get the money to purchaſe his ſhare of the patent, for we know he was not aſſiſted by GARRICK, becauſe his full and entire half remained with him till that unfortunate propenſity to dig for coals in OXFORDSHIRE induced him to get alſo a propenſity of mortgaging his ſhare piecemeal to his partner. It has been ſaid that he bought a very beautiful horſe to captivate the Duke of GRAFTON; who, offering any price for it, was told that the higheſt price that could be

fixed for it would be his Grace's acceptance, which handſome offer being graciouſly acceded to, he, through the intereſt of this nobleman, obtained a renewal of the patent, and that, therefore, he was aſſiſted by GARRICK; but this is very improbable, for it is not difficult to ſee that GARRICK could ſcarcely at that time have hinted a requeſt to perſons of condition and in power which would not have been readily granted, eſpecially any thing ſo evidently beneficial to the public and the credit of the theatre, after the diſtreſs and diſcredit it had ſo long experienced.

The real fact muſt remain a myſtery *. In the mean time it is my buſineſs to relate that, with a renewal of the patent theſe joint proprietors upon equal ſhares opened the theatre in 1747, with JOHNSON's celebrated Prologue. The beſt actors and actreſſes of

* I have taken ſome pains to come at this fact, though after all it is not of any great importance. LACEY was manager during the ſhort time that GREEN and AMBER held the property, and after their bankruptcy, perhaps in truſt for the aſſignees, and I am informed, from an authority I cannot doubt, that he immediately previous to GARRICK's joining with him in the management, ſtood in a manner in FLEETWOOD's ſhoes, and compounded with the performers and creditors of different deſcriptions, which is an additional argument in proof of GARRICK's ſtipulating for a clear ſtage and no favour.

courſe rallied round GARRICK, and he was ſoon reinforced by BARRY, Mrs. PRITCHARD, and Mrs. CIBBER.

As to Covent Garden theatre it continued till 1760, to be uninteruptedly managed by RICH; who, it muſt be confeſſed, upon his father's plan, though he was not the ſame nefarious character, continued to keep himſelf up as a formidable rival to the managers of Drury Lane. His own performance of Harlequin, and the advantage he took of Engliſh inclination for foreign gewgaws now and then operated in his favour with decided ſuperiority. In the time of FLEETWOOD, his pantomimes were a great injury to his opponents; and, though I do not find he was ever ſplendidly off, indeed he is deſcribed to have been at one time ſo neceſſitated as to have taken a houſe ſituated in three different counties to avoid the importunity of the Sheriffs' officers, yet he took care to ſatisfy, to the letter, his performers, and all thoſe with whom he made engagements.

This gave him a certain reſpectability without which no concern can maintain ſolid reputation; but his ſituation was nevertheleſs fluctuating, for, though at times the run of a ſucceſsful pantomime filled his treaſury, yet his ignorance of the common

buſineſs of the theatre, and want of diſcernment as to the merit of performers, gave the other houſe a pre-eminence which, with all the aſſiſtance of QUIN and others, beſpoke the favour of the critical and the judicious, eſpecially after it began to feel the influence of GARRICK's management.

Thus the ſucceſs of RICH was by fits and ſtarts. At Chriſtmas, perhaps, his houſe overflowed, and caricature prints were circulated with Harlequin weighing down the the theatrical ſcales, and GARRICK, BARRY, and all the force of Drury Lane kicking the beam; the infatuation over, his benches were empty and continued ſo till the French painter invented new ſcenery, and he perfected himſelf in new attitudes, and invented new pantomime tricks.

RICH, by this means, was of great utility throughout his whole management to the general theatrical intereſt. He was what a formidable minority are to an able miniſtry; and, though his meaſures were not ſo efficacious; yet it kept the exertions of his opponents braced to their full ſtrength and vigour, and this, by the operation now and then of a lucky hit, wrought wonderfully in his favour, both as to advantage and popularity. We have ſeen one inſtance of this in the *Beggar's Opera*. His own perfor-

mance alſo, which was incomparable in its way, was greatly followed, and when GARRICK ran *Romeo and Juliet*, in which he and Mrs. CIBBER performed the lovers, RICH inſtantly oppoſed to them BARRY and Miſs NOSSITER.

By theſe and other ſpirited inſtances of oppoſition he kept up a conſtant and formidable buſtle which it required very frequently the whole united force of his rivals to oppoſe. In Spectacle he was confeſſedly ſuperior to them; and as GARRICK knew and felt this, he ought to have entered into no competition with him, but have reſted his ſole expectation on the more reſpectable ground of giving every advantage to tragedy and comedy, and this he would very probably have done had it not been that ſufficient novelty was not to be procured, fewer authors of eminence by a conſiderable difference, as we ſhall preſently ſee, having appeared during the firſt ſixteen years of his management than during any equal period ſince SHAKESPEARE.

To this it may, perhaps, be owing that GARRICK was obliged to permit Spectacle occaſionally in his own defence. It however at length ſapped the foundation of his popularity; for, when RICH brought out The *Coronation*, which ſo completely

and deſervedly triumphed over the ſtupid, niggardly, parſimonious apology for it, that had been for a few nights foiſted on the public at Drury Lane, Covent Garden began to feel a powerful ſuperiority.

This ſuperiority gathered ſuch ſtrength that it began to maſter the whole exertions of GARRICK, gigantic as they were. Theſe advantages a number of circumſtances combined to ſtrengthen. BEARD, perhaps upon the whole the beſt Engliſh ſinger that ever was heard, whoſe excellence I ſhall not interrupt the thread of my preſent narrative to deſcribe, had married the daughter of RICH, and ſtept pretty forward in the muſical management. This circumſtance induced GARRICK to play off the old trick of *Romeo and Juliet*, by oppoſing LOWE and Mrs. VINCENT, as Macheath and Polly in the *Beggar's Opera*, to BEARD and Miſs BRENT, which, by way of parentheſis, provoked RICH to ſtart WILKINSON in the *Minor* againſt FOOTE. The conteſt, however operated greatly againſt Drury Lane. BEARD at the head of his phalanx was irreſiſtible, and certainly at no period has the real excellence and true character of Engliſh muſic been ſo well underſtood or ſo highly reliſhed.

Though it would be irregular to go at length

into this ſubject now, yet I ſhall indulge myſelf with ſaying a few proud words merely to ſhew that, in arts as well as in arms, we want only union to conquer the world. The public deciſion was at that time honeſt, fair, candid and impartial. The Italian opera was in a ſtate of merited celebrity which it had never known before, nor can ever know again; yet was the true and genuine beauties of Engliſh muſic felt and acknowledged, and the ſame taſte and judgment that admired the delicacy, the ſweetneſs, and the grandeur of JOMELLI, GALLUPPI, and PERGOLESE, delighted in the nature, the truth, and the beauty of PURCELL, ARNE, and BOYCE.

RICH, at the inſtance of BEARD, brought forward every thing which had muſical merit with every poſſible advantage. The *Beggar's Opera*, and The *Jovial Crew*, were relieved by The *Chaplet*, and The *Shepherd's Lottery*; and, to give contraſt conſequence, and diverſity to thoſe familiar materials, *Comus*, that wonderful union of exquiſite ſound, with incomparable ſenſe, which in theſe days of elephants, dragons, and flying cats, after being tortured, crippled, and mutilated, is compelled to halt on and ſing the dirge to its once perfect exiſtence, was brought forward with all its appropriate advantages, playful, winning, and diffuſing round

that enchantment by which the theatre was intended to delight and improve its auditors.

Rich died during the run of The *Coronation*, having accompliſhed the ſum of his glory, and left the theatre in equal ſhares between his widow and Mrs. Beard, Mrs. Bencroft, and Mrs. Morris, his three daughters. Beard was very ſenſibly appointed manager; who, dreading, perhaps the ſuperior power and ability of Garrick, whom he both loved and feared, determined to raiſe as formidable an oppoſition as poſſible upon the only ground on which he was able to make any thing like an effectual ſtand.

Italian ſinging was at that time rationally and judiciouſly taſted. He therefore thought that if opera could be attempted upon a grand ſcale to a grand effect it might give our theatres a conſequence as to muſic, which it had never known before. He knew there was an Engliſhman in whom were united the great requiſites of all the Italian ſchool; whoſe genius, mind, underſtanding, and knowledge were ſuperlative. He knew the compoſition of this man could be greatly ſupported with but very little auxiliary aſſiſtance, and the world were thus obliged by, perhaps, the greateſt muſical production in its

way in this or any other country, the *Artaxerxes* of ARNE.

Other muſical pieces followed, as we ſhall preſently ſee in their place, till the property of Covent Garden became ſo valuable that it was at length eagerly purchaſed in 1767 for ſixty thouſand pounds. Thus we find that the unremitting ſucceſs of this theatre was the ſole cauſe of GARRICK's retirement to ITALY. He had no novelty to produce that could ſtem this torrent. Hoſt as he was, he was almoſt alone. There were ſcarcely any authors to ſupport him; and, as to actors, KING had certainly attained that height of reputation which he has ever ſince invariably maintained and kept; but HOLLAND, and O'BRIEN, were only opening into fame. QUIN had long retired, and IRELAND had deprived the ſtage of BARRY, and WOODWARD. He had certainly ſtarted POWEL, whoſe merit he is ſaid to have dreaded, which I can ſcarcely credit, becauſe he knew better than any body that, admirable as POWEL's genius was, with ſo poor an underſtanding, it muſt run riot.

Thus the literal fact is, that the public were no longer GARRICK-mad, which I ſay more to their

ſhame than to his. His name was no longer an attraction. He performed to empty benches, notwithſtanding the laſt ſeaſon before he left ENGLAND he perſonated Scrub, the Ghoſt in *Hamlet*, and a great variety of other charcters in which he had never before appeared, and this very naturally made him ſo ſick that he retired to ITALY, that the public might feel his loſs; which they did moſt completely by the management of his partner; who, finding *Artaxerxes* had grown into high celebrity inſtantly brought out a ſtring of ſerious operas, without conſidering that to produce pieces of that deſcription it is neceſſary to have writers, compoſers, and ſingers.

CHAP. VI.

GARRICK AS AN AUTHOR TO 1763.

THOUGH the merit of GARRICK, considered as an author, is the deepeſt ſhade in his public character, yet it is one that very frequently relieves the picture to advantage; for, though, had he been nothing elſe his reputation would have been indeed but of a very inferior kind, the aſſiſtance this quality lent to the ſtage, and to ſtage effect, was of a firſt rate conſequence, for it improved and elevated his own acting, ſeperated, ſimpliſied, and regulated the productions of greater talents, and gave altogether a tone to the theatre which rendered it within the comprehenſion and taſte of the public, and highly promoted its intereſt as a ſchool of nature.

As manager, a quality of this perfect kind was to him and indeed to the public of conſummate advantage, and his conduct here in oppoſition to CIBBER ſhews that he not only poſſeſſed it in a much

more eminent degree, but knew better how to make uſe of it; for GARRICK would never have refuſed The *Beggar's Opera*, which CIBBER did; he knew too well his own intereſt. It is true we ſhall at times trace ſome traits of the man that now and then eclipſed the actor, ſuch as his refuſal of *She Stoops to Conquer*, becauſe GOLDSMITH wrote *Retaliation**, and other inſtances; but upon the whole his judgment was a very material cauſe of the ſucceſs of dramatic authors in the reign of GARRICK.

Juſtice obliges us from this concluſion to acknowledge that GARRICK's merit, as a dramatic writer,

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* GOLDSMITH's account of this in my hearing was that GARRICK wanted to foiſt in ſo much ſtuff of his own that he grew tired of his objections and would not leave the play with him, which foiſting in, perhaps, would have done the effect of the play no injury, though GOLDSMITH was twenty times a better writer than GARRICK; but this was not the caſe. GOLDSMITH had offended GARRICK, for a forced ſmile with him was always a ſymptom of anger, and therefore he would not take the pains to whiſtle to him. Thus knowing that GOLDSMITH was tremblingly alive all o'er upon all ſuch occaſions, which as an author was natural enough, but as a playwright might have been ſpared, he only claimed the privilege that other authors had given who had been benefited by his aſſiſtance, and this offer being, as he knew it would be, refuſed, he had a fair excuſe for getting rid of the play, which both his reſentment to GOLDSMITH and his friendſhip to KELLY, who, together with ſentimental comedy was cut up by it, had predetermined him not to accept upon any account.

conſiſts more of what is concealed from the public than what has been publiſhed; for he had little genius and great judgment, and, therefore, though his judgment became of the higheſt conſequence in directing genius in the productions of others it only ſerved to detect a paucity of genius in his own.

There is another and a material deduction from the merit of GARRICK, and yet it ought not to weigh againſt his reputation. I mean the reiterated neceſſity of writing pieces for temporary purpoſes in quality of manager. We have ſeen the beſt talents upon theſe ſubjects waſted to little purpoſe, and therefore much merit is attributable to him, who never actually failed in any one of theſe inſtances; on the contrary, there, as every where elſe, whatever abſence there might be of excellent poetry and fine conception in his pieces of this ſtamp, thoſe deficencies were ſo made up by diſpoſition and effect, that his judgment kept his reputation conſtantly afloat. Having premiſed ſo much, which certainly is but fair and candid, we ſhall let his dramatic pieces ſpeak for themſelves, at the ſame time that they bring out ſuch collateral circumſtances as may ſerve to illuſtrate the hiſtory of the ſtage.

It is plain that GARRICK had predetermined to

become an author as ſoon as poſſible, under an idea that if bad acting could be defended by an able pen good acting might be celebrated even by an indifferent one. To manifeſt, therefore, as ſoon as poſſible that ſuch was his reſolution, he brought out the *Lying Valet* in 1741, the very ſeaſon of his firſt appearance in Goodman's Fields, in which, of courſe, he performed the principal character. He has been accuſed of borrowing this piece from the French, and indeed Sharp has a family reſemblance of all the Scapins, and Criſpins, and Frontins of that theatre; it is not, however, the likeneſs of any one character but of the Valet, not only of FRANCE but of ENGLAND, and every where elſe. He lies out of fidelity to his maſter, he is in love with the chambermaid of his maſter's miſtreſs, and he is, in ſhort, what every other convenient ſervant ever was and ever will be. This is only the vehicle. The piece itſelf appears to me to be original, and is, as far as it goes, a complete dramatic performance. It is full of pleaſantry, intereſt, and effect, the writing is elevated enough for the purpoſe, and it has fewer faults than many productions of much greater men. I ſay ſo much becauſe I rather think that it is GARRICK's moſt complete dramatic production, and this ſhews that his mind was well made up to his profeſſion at ſtarting.

Whether GARRICK's time was ſo taken up in the ſtudy and performance of that prodigious number of parts of all deſcriptions by which he acquired ſo deſervedly the higheſt reputation, or whether he found any difficulty in keeping FLEETWOOD to a performance of his engagements, he did not bring out his next piece, which was *Miſs in her Teens*, till the latter part of the ſeaſon in which he was engaged with RICH. This piece had ſo much ſucceſs that on the fifteenth night, a fact that I had both from RICH and GARRICK, when the author received the play bills, he found his name advertiſed for a ſecond benefit, without his previous knowledge. RICH declared there was ſo much merit in the piece, and it had done the theatre ſo much ſervice, that the compliment itſelf would not have been recompenſe enough without this manner of conveying it, and GARRICK ſaid that he valued it only upon that account. At the ſame time it muſt be confeſſed that RICH has ſaid he would not have done this had he expected to have loſt GARRICK, and GARRICK, though he was ſtruck with the generoſity of the action, never imitated it but once during his whole management. *Miſs in her Teens* derived its beſt reputation from the performance of GARRICK and WOODWARD, in Fribble and

Flaſh. The piece itſelf is a ſtrong caracature, and therefore very little in nature.

Lethe was the firſt piece written by GARRICK, which was produced after he became manager of Drury Lane. It had made its appearance at the ſame theatre in 1740, but it was then a mere ſketch and ſoon withdrawn. GARRICK has added the character of Lord Chalkſtone when he produced it in 1747, which he acted moſt admirably. I cannot refrain from noticing that all the world have been deceived in the idea that this piece is taken from the French, and was originally called *Les Eaux D'Oblivion*, and I was myſelf in the error. I have however ſearched every authority, and particularly a book where I have at one view every piece that ever came out at the French theatre from the Troubadours up to 1773, and there is no ſuch piece to be found.

Romeo and Juliet, which play has been repeatedly altered on account of the ſudden change in Romeo's love from Roſaland to Juliet, and the effect of the cataſtrophe which was conceived to be incomplete, the propriety of which objections I have conſidered before, had ſo much effect that it has ever ſince kept the ſtage. GARRICK has touched

SHAKESPEAR with much modeſty and deference. It gave great aſſiſtance to his own incomparable acting. *Every Man in his Humour* is BEN JONSON's comedy altered with the ſame view to the original author's reputation. The *Fairies* from the *Midſummer's Night's Dream*, was attempted by GARRICK to leſs effect, though formed into an opera with the addition of ſongs by ſome celebrated writers. There was merit in it; but the different ingredients did not mix. It was performed by children. It was compoſed by SMITH, HANDEL's pupil; a good muſician with but little genius. The *Tempeſt*. This piece was ſome of SHAKESPEAR's ſcenes made into an opera, and alſo compoſed by SMITH. It had little effect; GARRICK ſhould not have brought it out; it was ſacrificing SHAKESPEAR to his own vanity. *Florizel and Perdita* was produced from a better motive. The two parts of the *Winter's Tale* can bear ſeparation on account of the great diſtance of time. GARRICK preſerved SHAKESPEAR. This piece, with the addition of ſongs, was afterwards performed at Covent Garden, the muſic was beautifully compoſed by ARNE. *Catherine and Petruchio* is SHAKESPEAR's *Taming of the Shrew*, cut into a farce, which every body has ſeen and every body admires. Theſe are the occaſions on which GARRICK evinced great dramatic judgment.

Lilliput was performed in 1757. This was the worſt of GARRICK's pieces. It had very little ſucceſs. It was performed by children. The *Male Coquette*, 1757. This piece was written at a very ſhort warning for WOODWARD's benefit, and intended to ridicule a ſpecies of men, or rather non-entities, who, though incapable of love, and inſenſible of female lovelineſs, talk like LOTHARIO of beauty that they never ſaw, and fancy raptures that they never felt. The character, however, was ſo diſguſting that as it involved an unmanly and ſhocking idea with it, the public very properly revolted at it. *Fribble* was bad enough, but *Daſodil* was deteſtable.

GARRICK altered The *Gameſter* from SHIRLEY in 1751. I have already explained the merit of of this alteration which is not ſo judicious as the alterations of GARRICK in general. *Iſabella* is altered from SOUTHERN by leaving out the comic part, much to the advantage of the play. The *Guardian*, a comedy of two acts, performed in 1759, and written for the purpoſe of bringing forward Miſs PRITCHARD, daughter to the celebrated actreſs of that name, is taken from the *Pupile* of FAGAN. The ſucceſs of Mademoiſelle GAUSSIN in this piece, who was complimented with verſes out of number, induced GARRICK, perhaps, to hope that his *Pupile* would arrive at the ſame celebrity. He was, how-

ever, miſtaken. He brought it out with the united ſtrength of himſelf, YATES, and O'BRIEN, and it had, as it deſerved, great ſucceſs.

The *Enchanter*, a kind of opera. It was merely a paſſable piece. The muſic was by SMITH; and LEONI, then a boy, appeared in it to great advantage. *Cymbeline*, in which GARRICK performed Poſthumous ſo admirably, is of courſe SHAKESPEAR's play, whoſe fame is certainly reſcued from HAWKINS, MARSH, BROOKS, and others, who had handled it too roughly. GARRICK, however, has ſunk the conduct of the phyſician, which accounts for the harmleſs potion ſwallowed by Imogen, and therefore the piece is incomplete. The *Farmer's Return from London*, was a temporary interlude written happily enough to ridicule the Cock Lane Ghoſt, which at that time engroſſed the talk of the town. This is the laſt production of GARRICK before his tour to ITALY. I ſhall therefore examine other authors up to that time, a review of whoſe works will bring out many collateral particulars relative to GARRICK.

CHAP. VII.

FOOTE, MACKLIN, AND MURPHY.

To ſhew how much the ſtage was indebted to GARRICK as an actor, and how tranſcendantly admirable his acting muſt have been, he maintained that great rank in reputation he ſo meritoriouſly filled during twenty-two years without the advantage of performing original characters, except a very few, and thoſe were principally written by himſelf.

As a proof of this, I cannot find during that period as many celebrated writers as I have often enumerated, in the courſe of this work, within a given period of five or ſix years. Inſtead, therefore, of inſerting in the head of this chapter the names of ſeveral writers of dramatic fame, I am unable to diſcover more than FOOTE, MACKLIN, and MURPHY. What then could poſſibly have kept the reputation of the theatre and brought it ſtep by ſtep to that bright fame it acquired, but the vigilance added to the tranſcendant merit of GARRICK, who

ranſacked the hidden treaſures of SHAKESPEAR, and his cotemporaries, brought them to view and gave them a poliſh by his exquiſite acting. MASSINGER, in ſome degree, eclipſed SHAKESPEAR, immediately before GARRICK.

FOOTE, an admirable but a moſt miſchievous writer, who emulated ARISTOPHANES with leſs genius and leſs feeling, who ſeemed fondly to fancy that to torture individuals was the only way to delight their fellow creatures, meaſuring their pleaſure by his malignity, who knew no quality of ſatire but perſonality, who would ſacrifice his beſt friend for the gratification of tormenting him, and who, after all was perpetually the cats paw to his own vanity, created, among the faſtidious, the four, and the heart burnt, a ſort of veneration for that exotic from GREECE the middle comedy, which greatly to the honour of the manly and benevolent character of the Engliſh, may have a dwindling and a rickety exiſtence, but can never flouriſh to maturity in this country.

Who cares now for any thing that CHURCHILL wrote? The topic of the day kept the world a tip toe for every new libel in which public men were branded with the accuſation of public crimes to lift

into notice private profligates and apoſtates. Had ſuch talents, for they were certainly eminent, been employed in general ſatire, which, by admoniſhing all, corrects many, and privately induces amendment by conviction. CHURCHILL would have lived in our minds. Now he is forgotten. Common nature is often abſurd, but it is never monſtrous. An indelible ſtain upon the reputation of DRYDEN, and of POPE, was cauſed by *Mac Flecknoe*, and the *Dunciad*, FOOTE, like CHURCHILL, was ſtained in this manner all over, and would have been at this moment as faſt, for neither of them can ever be peaceably, aſleep, if it were not for an attempt now and then to revive his pieces, which, however, their malice being defeated, have now but little attraction.

There is another thing which naturally preſents itſelf on an examination of theſe Drawcanſirs, theſe dealers in fiats, who expect the world to pay an implicit obedience, not to their opinions, for I will not be ſo uncharitable as to believe they always think what they write, but to their aſſertions, and this is, that, upon the principal that all critics ought to poſſeſs in their own minds a certificate of their ability to write as well as thoſe authors they criticiſe, ſo the minds of all moral menders ought to be moral.

As the dramatic pieces of FOOTE will bring out various obſervations naturally connected with them, I ſhall now proceed to their examination. *Taſte.* This piece was produced in 1752, at which time FOOTE was in that proſperity which rendered it needleſs to write for profit. He therefore gave all the emoluments to the celebrated JEMMY WORSDALE, the very perſon who took POPE's manuſcript letters to CURL. It did not however greatly ſucceed. It was intended to ridicule generally an abſurd paſſion for virtû, but it was ſo confined to the great, who are too callous to feel attacks of this kind, that it was no further uſeful to the author's reputation than to ſhew that he could write, and that he was capable of attacking whatever might be the reigning folly.

The *Engliſhman in Paris*, 1753, is a farce of conſiderable merit. The characters are natural, the plot is intereſting, and the drift is laudable. Had FOOTE uniformly kept to this ſpecies of writing, he would certainly have eſtabliſhed a legitimate reputation. In his next piece, The *Knights*, he began to indulge his favourite propenſity by perſonating a peculiar character whom he had the ſupreme felicity of rendering ridiculous in his neighbourhood, where till then he had been reſpected and beloved, and

had never, till the exhibition of this exaggerated portrait, been ſuſpected of poſſeſſing any follies but what were perfectly harmleſs and innofenſive and in common with thoſe of his neighbours and friends.

The *Engliſhman returned from Paris*, is a piece of a better kind. It is general and has good diſcrimination. It is alſo remarkable for a peculiar neat diction that Foote had a good knack of writing. He had, however, perpetually the contrary fault, and having filled his head with that ſhort reſponſive dialogue, which, though tierce enough in the French, is flat and palling on the Engliſh ſtage, the ear was in his pieces too frequently tired with, "certainly, no doubt, granted", and a long ſtring of other ſimilar expreſſions which are repeated almoſt verbatim in every one of his plays.

The *Author*, one of Foote's outragious perſonalties, was performed at Drury Lane in 1757. The gentleman mimicked in this piece and held up by Foote as an object for the hand of ſcorn to point its ſlow and moving finger at was a perſon of fortune not in any reſpect deſerving of public or private reprehenſion for any breach of honour, liberality, or moral rectitude, but becauſe he hap-

pened to have peculiarities. It would have been more to the honour of the ſatiriſt if his own peculiarities had been as little liable to reproach. The gentleman alluded to had intereſt enough to get the piece ſuppreſſed. The *Diverſions of the Morning* was compoſed of *Taſte* and other things.

The *Minor* was performed in 1760. This piece is full of perſonalities. We here begin to ſee in FOOTE a mixture of SHADWELL and FIELDING; from the firſt he had plenty of opportunity to take his bullies, and his bawds, and, if the latter ridiculed COCK, the auctioneer, FOOTE had nothing to do but retail the ſame materials in order to repreſent COCK's ſucceſſor LANGFORD.

The drift of this piece, which it muſt be confeſſed is laudable enough, might have been brought about without any of theſe reprehenſibles vehicles. Profligacy, impoſition, and hypocriſy are the proper objects of ridicule for the theatre; but why are particular characters held up as the only promulgators of theſe evils? If the hydra vice is to be deſtroyed by ſtriking at a ſingle bawd, a ſingle auctioneer, and a ſingle methodiſt, then is the labour no longer Herculean,

Every body knows that this was not the fact. Mother DOUGLAS, LANGFORD, and WHITEFIELD were laughed at, but wenching, tricking, and praying went on as before; and thus general reprobation was loſt in perſonal ridicule, and the ſeverity of the ſatiriſt eclipſed by the adroitneſs of the mimic.

The *Orators*, performed at the Haymarket in 1762, is a kind of acted illuſtration of the principles of oratory. It contains as uſual many perſonalities, and was rendered celebrated by FOOTE's mimicking a well known Dublin printer, who had but one leg. The ſatiriſt little dreamt at that time that the perſonal defect, at leaſt which he thought proper to expoſe to laughter, would one day be his own. The printer, when he caught him upon his own ground, trounced him ſeverely; a Dublin jury not being of opinion that natural infirmities ought to be quietly ſported with. Upon this occaſion FOOTE wrote a Prologue in which he modeſtly procured himſelf to be called the Engliſh ARISTOPHANES.

The *Mayor of Garrat*, performed in 1763, is generally ſuppoſed to be in every reſpect original. This, however, is not true, as any one may be convinced who chuſes to look at SHADWELL's *Epſom Wells*, where they will find Major Sturgeon, Jerry

Sneak, Bruin, and the two wives. The Major, who every body knew, talked of muſtering up courage enough to cane the poet. No body would have been ſorry if he had kept his word. Theſe are all FOOTE's pieces within my preſent promiſe.

MACKLIN, whoſe writing was as harſh and as hard as his conduct was rude and dogmatic, who, though he did not produce many pieces, contrived to make one anſwer the purpoſe of many, whoſe ſtrange pecularities made him a torment to himſelf and to every body elſe, was, however, a uſeful and ſometimes a great actor, and very far from an inferior author.

MACKLIN's firſt piece was *Henry the Seventh, or the Popiſh Impoſtor.* It appeared at Drury Lane the year that GARRICK performed at Covent Garden. The ſecond title of this piece is a miſnomer, for the ſtory is that of *Perkin Warbeck*, which we have ſeen treated unſucceſsfully before, and a man could not be ſaid to be an impoſtor by profeſſing the eſtabliſhed religion. It was, however, in every reſpect faulty and univerſally rejected. MACKLIN's friends are ſolicitous to retrieve his fame by the ſtale excuſe that it was done in a hurry, to which they add that his employment as manager prevented him

from paying it the private attention it ought to have received. In the firſt place, if he did not take time enough he ought to have found more, and in the ſecond, he was not manager in that year, LACEY being then in that capacity and proprietor as we have ſeen with GREEN and AMBER.

A Will or no Will has been frequently acted for MACKLIN's benefit but never was conſidered of conſequence enough to be regularly brought forward. The *Suſpicious Huſband Critized*, is of courſe an invidious thing. The play it was meant to ridicule ſtanding deſervedly high in the public opinion. It had but little ſucceſs, yet more than it merited. The *Fortune Hunters* never was performed except three or four different times at the author's benefits. *Covent Garden Theatre, or Peter Paſquin turned Drawcanſir.* Up to this period we find MACKLIN nothing more than an imitator of FIELDING. His performances were temporary, and principally a ridicule on theatres and plays, naturally poor and unprofitable to the fame of an author.

Love Alamode was performed at Drury Lane in 1760. This piece, though heaven knows it has no ſuperior traits of genius or talents, made the author a little fortune. When it came out, it was ſtrongly

ſupported and ſtrongly oppoſed. Its partizans, however, at length got the better, and this victory gave the farce an admitted conſeqenee it certainly did not critically deſerve. The ſtory has been fifty times gone over, and the denouement has always been the ſame in fact, though never ſo bad in effect as in *Love Alamode*. To made a needy Iriſhman the only diſintereſted lover of a lady apparently without fortune is certainly a little too much upon the brogue, eſpecially when this Iriſhman is the nephew of the lady's guardian, who would certainly, both naturally and theatrically ſpeaking, have let him into the ſecret.

This farce, owing to a number of adventitious circumſtances, had great ſucceſs, and this created a report, naturally enough, that MACKLIN was not the author of it, which, accordiug to cuſtom, though every body knew the contrary, was at one time pretty generally believed. The report itſelf is not ſo extraordinary as that with all his ſourneſs and irraſcibility he had the good ſenſe to treat it with contempt.

The *Married Libertine* was performed at Covent Garden in 1761. It was very ſtrongly oppoſed during its run, which was no more than nine nights. The conteſt relative to this play was like that which

diſtinguiſhed *Love Alamode.* It did not, however, terminate ſo fortunately. The author was as ſtreniouſly ſupported by his countrymen, who remembered their triumph in favour of Little Ireland and Sir Callaghan, but the merits were univerſally allowed not to bear them out; the diſtinction, however, was not correct. As FOOTE's characters were notoriouſly held out to ridicule ſome perſon well known, ſo the public gave MACKLIN the credit, or rather the obloquy, of intending by his ſome perſon the idea of whom had never entered his imagination, and thus, as the ſuppoſed perſonification of Lord BUTE had created a hoſt of friends and enemies in Sir Archy, ſo here the character of Lord Bellevile was ſuppoſed to imply a married nobleman whoſe intrigues at that time were pretty notorious. The *Married Libertine* has never ſince been reſumed, though it certainly had more merit than *Love Ala Mode.*

MURPHY, an author of merited celebrity, who has written tragedy, comedy, and farce, with fair and legitimate pretenſions to fame, an extent of dramatic talents very rarely concentrated in one wriſer, comes next into conſideration, and I am pleaſed to acknowledge that the repugnance naturally ariſing from an unwillingneſs to give pain to living authors

will in this inſtance yield to the pleaſure of recording truth and praiſe in the ſame delineation.

With the different purſuits of Mr. MURPHY I have nothing to do. Biographers of the living have at beſt an awkward taſk to perform, and it is therefore ſeldom attempted with ſucceſs but by the illiberal and the malignant, who are as ſure to find readers in thoſe whoſe minds are congenial to their own as they are to be ſpurned and execrated by men of candour, generoſity, and judgment.

Mr. MURPHY was intended for buſineſs, has been a party man, was an actor, a dramatic writer, and at length a barriſter, about which a great deal has been ſaid; but how any part of it can, as fact, tell to his diſadvantage is beyond the admiſſion of my capacity. All profeſſions are honourable, if they are honourably borne; but the *ipſe dixits* of CHURCHIL have found their low and dirty level, and it would be well for the ſocieties of the Inns of Court if they never had admitted among them men whoſe purſuits had been more diſhonourable than thoſe who have followed the profeſſion of an actor.

MURPHY's firſt piece was the *Apprentice*, 1756, a farce ſo well known and ſo generally approved

that every reader can anticipate a deſcription of it. I ſhall, therefore, ſay that, being his firſt attempt, it gave good proof of that coming dramatic reputation which this author has ſo ably eſtabliſhed. The *Spouter, or the Triple Revenge*, is a ſtrange piece in which GARRICK, RICH, and young CIBBER, connived at being ridiculed. It ſeems to have been one of thoſe left handed whims of GARRICK, like The *Sick Monkey*, to anticipate ridicule, which, perhaps, would never have been conceived but in his own imagination. It had no ſucceſs. The *Engliſhman from Paris*, which was performed in 1756 only a ſingle night, and to which MURPHY ſpoke the Prologue, was, of courſe, the ſubject of FOOTE's *Engliſhman returned from Paris*, to which latter the town gave the preference.

The *Upholſterer*. This piece, which has been ſo long and ſo deſervedly a favourite, was originally performed for MOSSOP's benefit, but was found to poſſeſs ſo much merit that the managers very gladly admitted it among their ſtock performances. The hint is taken from the *Spectator*, and is moſt completely to the very purpoſe of farce; a diſcrimination which was peculiarly the talent of MURPHY.

We now come to this author's firſt tragedy, which was The *Orphan of China*. The original ſtory

of this play is to be met with in DU HALDE's Hiſtory of China, which VOLTAIRE had wrought into a tragedy, and of which I have already ſpoken. MURPHY's play is an alteration of VOLTAIRE, with an eye, perhaps, to the *Heraclius* of CORNEILLE. It was certainly judicious to bring forward the Orphan and make him a principal character in the piece, but it has given it, therefore, a reſemblance to *Merope*, and thoſe numerous tragedies of the ſame complexion.

This piece, notwithſtanding GARRICK's incomparable acting, and the opportunity it gave of diſplaying the valuable merits of Mrs. YATES, and other adventitious circumſtances, did not certainly ſucceed to the degree its merits had promiſed, for which a variety of reaſons have been given, and one of them of a curious and private nature relative to a pique taken abſurdly by GARRICK, in conſequence of a political tranſaction but I apprehend it principally aroſe, for theſe circumſtances are generally eaſily traceable, from this play being conſidered a ſort of innovation on tragedy, and conſiſting of pompous and poetic, rather than affecting and intereſting language, and depicting great rather than natural manners. There may be too much truth in this laſt

obſervation, and perhaps it obtains too generally in MURPHY, but the opportunities this has given to call forth great and tranſcendant powers in actors have made ample amends, as far as it reſpects the general advantage of the theatre, no dramatic author, in our recollection, having given additional luſtre to the merits of more various and eminent performers.

The *Deſart Iſland*, 1760. This piece, which is taken from *Metaſtaſio*, is better written, that is to ſay with more nature, than this author's ſerious pieces in general. It is, however, too barren of incident. The *Way to Keep Him* accompanied this piece; they were each written in three acts and intended to make up the ſame evening's entertainment, a mode of introduction that has ſeldom ſucceeded. The *Deſert Iſland* was ſoon withdrawn, and the author, by adding two acts to The *Way to Keep Him*, gave it a permanent right to keep the ſtage.

The *Way to Keep Him* is certainly a play of conſiderable merit; its bent and drift are truly praiſe worthy, and it is in many reſpects a kind of improvement upon CIBBER. It is curious to remark that the critics decided, when it was performed in three acts, that it was imperfect; and, when it was extended to five, that the addition had ſpoiled a perfect

piece. The new character of Sir Baſhful Conſtant, was alſo ſettled both to be totally out of nature and to be the actual portrait of a perſon then living. That Sir Baſhful is not out of nature will, I believe, be eaſily granted, and as to the other aſſertion, it cannot be truth, unleſs the perſon alluded to was both an Engliſhman and a native of France, for the character and a good deal of the conduct are taken from a play of La Chaussee.

All in the Wrong was brought out in 1761, at Drury Lane, during the ſummer ſeaſon, at which time Foote, Murphy, and Yates, had the theatre to themſelves, a plan, which Garrick well knew would come to nothing, and that he ſhould get the pieces then produced upon eaſy terms, ſeveral of which were intended to have been brought forward. None however, was actually produced, except thoſe of Murphy, and one written by Bentley, which we ſhall ſee in its place called The *Wiſhes, or Harlequin's Mouth Opened.*

Murphy was a moſt powerful ally in this confederacy. *All in the Wrong*, a play which has been long a deſerving favourite, had in it as much of ſtage buſtle and perplexity as any piece that ever appeared; and, as it was intended to ridicule a na-

tural though abſurd paſſion at all points, and in every poſſible view, it certainly exhibited a moſt happy combination of circumſtances by no means too ſtrong, for what is there extravagant that jealouſy will not fancy, and gave that inveterate folly a violent correction which alone can maſter its own irratibility.

If the knot of circumſtances in *All in the Wrong* had been as ingeniouſly untied as it was knit together, no candid critic could have found in it any thing to caval at. As to the objection that has been generally made to MURPHY's comedies, that they have not the wit of CONGRIEVE and VANBRUGH, the anis that they have then more nature, for indeed quibble and point is not the common language of mankind, and in particular when the paſſions are buſily at work it is a ſtronger proof of nature to conſult the heart, than the head; from one the language comes meaſured and cold, from the other intuitive and animated.

The *Old Maid* was performed the ſame ſummer. It contains a ſeries of pleaſant circumſtances occaſioned by a ſimple and natural equivoque, a mode of conveying comic humour of the beſt kind when it is rationally treated, but of the moſt monſtrous

and burleſque when violently caricatured. The ſtage is too much a ſtranger to this ſpecies of after-piece. Every thing in The *Old Maid* is juſt, happy, full of effect, and managed with a nice and penetrating diſcrimination that are highly creditable to the author; upon the whole there is ſcarcely any piece upon the ſtage more perfect in its way. The reſemblance it bears to *L'Etourderie*, of FAGAN, is only that fair advantage of which every author has a right to a avail himſelf,

The *Citizen*, which was alſo performed in the ſummer of 1761, and which brought Miſs ELLIOT on the ſtage, has proved of conſiderable value to the theatre. Nothing is more ſenſible or more meritorious in managers than to ſtrengthen their intereſt as to the half price. MURPHY was admirably well calculated to aſſiſt the theatre in this particular. When WOODWARD came from IRELAND, The *Citizen*, The *Upholſterer*, and The *Apprentice*, brought at half price a moſt incredible ſum for at leaſt three years, and no trifle for ſeveral years afterwards

The *Citizen* was well calculated to diſplay the various merit of Miſs ELLIOT, who certainly performed Maria incomparably; and, though there is

ſome extravagance in the conduct, the drift is laudable, and the circumſtances are natural. The ſcene which the author pretends to cover by giving an idea that it is an imitation of *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, is The *Fauſſe Agnes* of DESTOUCHES, even to the *oui Monſieur*, which has always ſo good an effect. There is, however, no harm in this. Every author has a right to imitate whatever he is capable of improving.

CHAP. VIII.

YOUNG, MALLET, DODSLEY, BROOKE, WILLIAM SHIRLEY, AND OTHERS.

THE works of the authors now under conſideration do not by any means militate againſt my declaration as to the inconſiderable number of celebrated dramatic pieces during the firſt ſixteen years of GARRIK's reign, moſt of their productions, as will appear, having ſeen the world before the year 1741; but, as part of them were brought forward after that period, I thought it beſt to give the whole in one view.

YOUNG, whoſe great character was ſingularity, who ſeems in the courſe of his life to have been conſtant to all the virtues and vices, and like Captain PLUME with his fifteen attachments never melancholy for one, whoſe writings are in places trite and in others ſublime, who had great natural requiſites, but who ſeems ambitious to be conſidered more as an uucommon than an origiginal poet, wrote

three tragedies, one of which is well known to the public.

Buſiris 1719, like moſt of YOUNG's works is an original conception of its author, who ſeems every where to have introduced characters which he knew from the beginning he ſhould not know how to diſpoſe of at laſt, and, therefore, he calls in the aſſiſtance of a dagger to get rid of them. *Buſiris* is high and ſounding, but has no means of acceſs to the heart.

The *Revenge* is well known, becauſe it has been by ſome conſidered as an improvement on *Othello*, Zanga's revenge being held up as more natural and more equitable than that of Iago; but this would be to make a virtue of revenge and to tolerate murder. It is ridiculous to compare the probable or the moral propriety of the two pieces upon this point. Othello truſts a man whom he had loaded with benefits, and on whoſe gratitude he has every right to repoſe. Alonzo confides his ſoul to a proud African Prince, his ſlave, whoſe nature he muſt know, if he knew any thing, was vindictive malignity; and as if it was not enough to ſubmit his ſenſes to the controul of ſuch a mind, he does all this with his eyes open, for he is conſcious of having dealt this gloomy and im-

placable Moor a blow, which indelible ſtain and diſgrace he would infallibly wipe off with his blood, after having reproached him with his folly and weakneſs in having liſtened to him.

As to the cauſes of jealouſy they are infinitely pre-eminent on the ſide of SHAKESPEAR, whoſe trifles, light as air, blind ſuſpicion, while forged letters, pictures, and ſuch groſs and palpable evidence would detect the villain in the mind of any man above an idiot, and a driveller. In ſhort, the plot cannot be defended except by thoſe who are mad enough to maintain that a family ought to be deſtroyed for a fancied injury, that the revenge of Zanga, which ſuperſedes law, juſtice, and morality, may be tolerated, and that the folly and ſtupidity of Alonzo deſerves an exemplary puniſhment. There are certainly paſſages of conſiderable merit in the play; for, whoever YOUNG has imitated, the writing is his own, which it is too little to ſay is greatly above Mrs. BEHN, and it would be too much to ſay that it is any thing equal to SHAKESPEAR.

Of the tragedy of The *Brothers*, Dr. JOHNSON tells us the world has ſaid nothing, and therefore he may be allowed the ſame indulgence. One author

has, however, ſaid a great deal of it; and, after going into an elaborate and general account of its merits, he tries to prove his aſſertion by ſaying that the author nobly gave up the profits for the propagation of the goſpel in foreign parts. YOUNG has been ſaid to have written with the energy of DRYDEN, but the only reſemblance between them ſeems to be, that YOUNG dedicated the *Revenge* to the infamous WHARTON, and DRYDEN his *Marriage ala Mode* to WHARTON's infamous relation ROCHESTER.

MALLET, a writer with more cunning than genius, who courted the great to better purpoſes than authors in general are able to do, and whom JOHNSON has, meanly for himſelf, ſtigmatized in his Dictionary in his etymology of the word alias *, wrote

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* This curious inſtance of deliberate malevolence ought be noticed. JOHNSON and MALLET were together looking at the wild beaſts in the Tower, and MALLET obſerved, as they were noticing the uncouthneſs of a Greenland bear, that it had ſtrong reſemblance to JOHNSON, remarking dryly that he did not know which was the handſomeſt, the bear or the doctor. JOHNSON did not chuſe to reſent the matter upon the ſpot, but laid up this injury in his mind, with a determination to take public revenge. Accordingly, when he compiled his Dictionary, having occaſion to explain the etymology of the term *alias*, he gives it the following conſtruction. It ſhould be obſerved that MALLET's real name was MALLOOH, and the doctor, of courſe, concluded that he had ſome particular reaſon for

ſeveral things of different deſcriptions and the following pieces for the theatre.

Euridice is a weak tragedy and never had reputable ſucceſs, though ſtrengthened by the performance of GARRICK and Mrs. CIBBER, when it was revived in 1760. It originally appeared in 1731. *Muſtapha*, a ſubject treated before by Lord ORRERY and Lord BROOK, was probably written by MALLET to ſhew his attention to noble writers. It had better ſucceſs than *Euridice*, but not enough to ſatisfy any author of reputation. *Alfred* was originally performed in 1740, at the Gardens at Cliefdon, in commemoration of the acceſſion of GEORGE the firſt, and in 1751 at Drury Lane*, at which time it had undergone conſiderable alterations and had ſucceſs, great part of which, however, was aſcribable to the beatiful muſic of ARNE. THOMPSON had a hand in this piece.

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concealing it. "Alias," ſays he, "is a Latin word ſignifying other-"wiſe; as Mallet, alias Malloch; that is, otherwiſe Malloch."

* We are told from good authority that MALLET procured *Alfred* to be performed at Drury Lane by inſinuating to GARRICK that in his Life of MARLBOROUGH he ſhould, by an ingenious device find a nich for the hero of the ſtage. "My dear friend," ſaid GARRICK, "have you left off to write for the ſtage?" The hint was taken, and *Alfred* was produced.

Britannia, in which there is ſome charming muſic by ARNE, had good ſucceſs, chiefly owing, however to a prologue that GARRICK ſpoke in the character of a drunken ſailor. *Elvira*, 1763. This is MALLET's beſt dramatic production, but it had little ſucceſs notwithſtanding GARRICK, whom MALLET ſeems to have known how to manage, did his utmoſt for it. It however contained unpopular ſentiments aud could not reſiſt the oppoſition that was made to it.

DODSLEY, who by his induſtry and his ingenuity was of great uſe to the cauſe of the theatre, and indeed of literature in general, and who by his modeſty and good ſenſe preſerved a reſpectable reputation, and accompliſhed the difficult taſk of conciliating the favour of many friends, wrote the following pieces.

The *Toyſhop*, which is one of thoſe various dramas that have originated from RANDOLPH's *Muſes Looking Glaſs*, and which good naturedly rebukes faſhionable follies. In ſhort it is FOOTE's piece called *Taſte* with all its points, and none of its aſperity. It was performed at Covent Garden in 1735 with good ſucceſs. The *King and the Miller of Mansfield*, a pleaſant and well known farce, which was afterwards tranſlated into French by SEDAINE,

the muſic by MONSIGNY, with moſt extraordinary ſucceſs, is founded on a traditional ſtory in the reign of HENRY the ſecond. It has ever been deſervedly a favourite. *Sir John Cockle at Court*, alſo has merit but has the diſadvantage of all ſequels. The circumſtance, however, of making a man of plain integrity reſiſt the corruption of a court is certainly a fair object for a dramatic pen.

The *Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green* is an unhappy ſubject. It did not ſucceed. *Rex et Ponſifex* is only known in a volume of DODSLEY's works modleſtly called *Trifles*. *Cleone*, is a tragedy of ſome merit. It had great ſucceſs which was principally owing, however, to the acting of Mrs. BELLAMY, who certainly was never in any other character ſo excellent. It is, however unaffected, and pathetic, and the intereſt is in many places ſtrong and home to the heart.

BROOKE, who was a reſpectable though by no means a firſt rate author, wrote fifteen dramatic pieces generally with indifferent ſucceſs. In his writings is diffuſed a turbulent ſpirit of liberty, which may ſerve party purpoſes, but ought not to pervade theatrical productions. *Guſtavus Vaſa* was prohibited, but a ſubſcription of a thouſand pounds

made the author amends. The piece was afterwards performed on the Iriſh ſtage with alterations. The *Earl of Weſtmoreland* was performed in IRELAND with ſucceſs. *Jack the Giant Queller* was interdicted, though performed in IRELAND.

The *Earl of Eſſex* is well written in places, but the public gave the preference to the play of BANKS on this ſubject for the reaſons we have already ſeen *.

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* This play would ſcarcely be known but for a ſtrange thing ſaid by Dr. JOHNSON about it. which without examination paſſed ſo implicitly for ſterling reaſon, that even the author conſented to alter the line which is reprobated by the remark. JOHNSON is ſaid to have been ſolicitous to have a ſpecimen of BROOKE's language, and Mr. SHERIDAN repeated to him the line at the end of the firſt act which runs thus,

Who rule o'er freemen ſhould themſelves be free.

The Doctor's anſwer was that it would be as proper to ſay,

Who drives fat oxen ſhould himſelf be fat.

Than which nothing can be more falſe, either literally or figuratively. It ſo happens that nothing can be better or more juſt than the ſentiment of BROOKE, though perhaps bunglingly expreſſed. He alone is proper to rule over freemen who in his heart feels and cheriſhes the principles of freedom. What is there amiſs in the clear and obvious truth this conveys? Were this principle of argument carried on in the ſentiment of JOHNSON it would mean, if it were intended to mean any thing, that the drover muſt not only be corpulent which would be an impediment to his driving oxen, but fit for killing,

Antony and Cleopatra, The *Impoſtor*, *Cymbeline*, *Montezuma*, The *Veſtal Virgin*, The *Contending Brothers*, The *Charitable Aſſociation*, The *Female Officer*, The *Marriage Contract*, and *Ruth*, make up the number of this author's plays. They are all imitations or alterations of other writers as may be ſeen by their titles, but they were never performed.

WILLIAM SHIRLEY, an excellent calculator, except as to the merit of dramatic productions, wrote a ſtring of pieces, the reception of which tolerably well proves my aſſertion. The *Paricide* was performed once and undeſervedly damned, if we may credit the author's dedication of it to RICH. *King Pepin's Campaign*, was ſhort and unſucceſsful. *Edward the Black Prince*, an awkward attempt at an imitation of SHAKESPEAR, was the third misfortune that befel this author on his dramatic road. *Electra* was as unfortunate an imitation of SOPHOCLES as *Edward* had been of SHAKESPEAR. It had a more

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which is a quality neceſſary in the oxen, but not in the drover, becauſe men eat oxen, but not drovers. Nay, it is falſe, ſift it how you may. The original poſition is wrong. Freemen may be ruled and led, but they cannot be driven; but it would be folly to purſue it any further. I ſhall therefore only add that this was one of thoſe inſtances in which JOHNSON found it eaſier to knock down his auditors than to convince them.

merciful exit, for the Lord Chamberlain interdicted it, and therefore the author was leſs expoſed.

The *Birth of Hercules* was written immediately after *Artaxerxes*, and compoſed by ARNE. It was rehearſed but never performed. The muſic was extremely beautiful, but it would not probably have ſucceeded; it was not dramatic. The ſongs compoſed for BEARD, TENDUCCI, PERETTI, and Miſs BRENT, were of the firſt excellence. I was preſent at the rehearſal and their effect will never be eraſed from my memory. It was withdrawn, as it was generally underſtood, through ſome caprice of the author. The *Roman Sacrifice*, the laſt of this author's plays that appeared on the ſtage, was, however, only performed four nights. the remainder of the liſt which were printed but never otherwiſe produced, were the *Roman Victim*, *Alcibiades*, The *Firſt and Second Parts of Henry the Second*, The *Fall of Carthage*, *All Miſtaken*, The *Good Engliſhman*, *Faſhionable Friendſhip*, The *Shepherd's Courtſhip*, and *Hecate's Prophecy*.

WORSDALE, a painter and a mimic, and rather a retainer to authors than an author himſelf, and in particular the Jackall of the Lion POPE *, was an

* The circumſtance relative to POPE's Letters, which are hinted

apprentice to Sir GODFREY KNELLER, and turned out of his maſter's houſe for marrying the knight's niece. He was a facecious good natured fellow, and author of many trifling productions, in ſhort a kind of ſecond DURFEY. His dramatic pieces are *A Cure for a Scold*, which is SHAKESPEAR'S *Taming of the Shrew*, made very unſucceſsfully into a ballad opera. The *Aſſembly*, which had no merit but his own admirable performance of an old woman, The *Queen of Spain*, which was probably a burleſque, The *Extravagant Juſtice*, known only by name, and *Gaſconade the Great*, intended as a laugh at the partiality of the King of FRANCE to Madame de POMPADOUR.

HAVARD, a reſpectable actor, and a reputable

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at already, was briefly thus, and managed with conſummate art. It did not ſucceed. POPE privately employed JEMMY WORSDALE to carry ſpurious copies of his letters both to LINTOT and CURL. neither of whom, as the letters did not come authenticated by the author, would treat for them. This was the very thing POPE wanted; for it now appeared certain that if ſomething were not done his correſpondence would be laid before the public ſurreptitiouſly. It behoved him, awkward as the circumſtance was, to ſound his own trumpet. Thus—if I may be allowed the expreſſion—he ſubmitted to the public, with great deference, his own poſthumous works; and thus did he cheat that very poſterity whoſe favour he had made it the buſineſs of his life to conciliate.

character, wrote *Scanderbeg*, founded upon LILLO's *Chriſtian Hero*, which had little ſucceſs. *King Charles the Firſt*, did credit to the author and the ſtage, but Lord CHESTERFIELD's remark on it in his famous ſpeech againſt the licencing act was that it was of too recent, too melancholy, and too ſolemn a nature to be heard of any where but in a pulpit; *Regulus*, has ſome ſterling merit, but it had but little ſucceſs, The *Elopement*, a mere farce, was acted only at his benefit.

MARSH, who was at different times a pariſh clerk, a bookſeller, and a Weſtminſter juſtice, and who fancied himſelf an author, wrote a miſerable piece called *Amaſis, King of Egypt*, performed one night only in the Haymarket; and altered, from SHAKESPEAR, *Cymbeline*, The *Winter's Tale*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, neither of which, ſo altered, was ever performed at all. ARTHUR, the actor, wrote The *Lucky Diſcovery*, merely to aſſiſt his benefit.

CHAP. IX.

THE HOADLYS, WHITEHEAD, JOHNSON, MOORE, AND OTHER AUTHORS TO 1763.

Dr. Benjamin Hoadly, the eldeſt ſon of the celebrated biſhop of Wincheſter, was a phyſician of conſiderable eminence, and, in addition to other ingenious productions, wrote the well known and greatly admired comedy of The *Suſpicious Huſband.* This was one of the firſt novelties that Garrick brought out after he had poſſeſſion of the management. It certainly has great intrinſic merit as every body knows; much of which, however, was owing to Garrick's judicious advice and aſſiſtance during its preparation for the ſtage, which he gave very honeſtly, and which was permitted with even deference by Hoadly; who, admirable as he was in his various writings upon grave ſubjects, found great judgment and knowledge in the alterations made by his friend, who in particular modelled Ranger to his own manner, and afterwards performed it incomparably.

Dr. JOHN HOADLY, brother of BENJAMIN who had alſo a hand in writing the *Suſpicious Huſband*, which was originally intended to be called The *Rake*, wrote ſeveral dramatic pieces *.

The *Contraſt* was written by the Chancellor, with the aſſiſtance of his brother BENJAMIN, indeed they ſeldom wrote upon any ſubject without conſulting each other. The deſign of this piece was to ridicule the poets of that day, but the biſhop their father, thinking the ſubject too ludicrous to be treated by his ſons, prevailed upon them to withdraw it. It however had been played five times before this

* I had the honour of receiving a great deal of attention from this gentleman in the early part of my life, when he was Chancellor of Wincheſter, Rector of St. Mary, at Southampton, and held all thoſe other places of immunity that might naturally be in the poſſeſſion of the biſhop of Wincheſter's ſon, and, having met him frequently afterwards at GARRICK's houſe at Hampton, at the time I was one of his privy counſel, I have been preſent at converſations wherein, with all the playfulneſs of a boy, though he was then tormented with the gout and obliged to be wheeled from room to room in one of MERLIN's chairs, who was at that time newly arrived among us, thoſe pranks which he, GARRICK, and HOGARTH played together were reiterated. He delighted in the theatre though an exemplary divine, and, though he knew how to treat ſerious ſubjects with proper ſtrength of underſtanding and due ſolemnity, he loved a jeſt in his ſoul. His wit, however, was of the beſt kind; for, though it was irreſiſtable, it never gave a moment's pain on reflection to him or his hearers.

mandate, and with great applauſe. The ſubject did not die for FIELDING afterwards modelled his *Paſquin* after it.

Jeptha was an oratorio, *Love's Revenge* an opera, ſo was *Phœbe*, ſo was The *Force of Truth*, Doctor GREENE was the compoſer of theſe operas. HOADLY would have written other pieces for the ſtage if he had not been reſtrained by the entreaties of his father, who with great paternal regard had ſtudied to make his means honourable and ample. He dabbled, however, a great deal in private, and, among other efforts, he reviſed LILLO's *Arden of Feverſham*, wrote a tragedy called *Cromwell*, and planned a farce called The *Houſekeeper*, on the ſubject of *High Life below Stairs*, ſomething relative to which I privately know; but, as much of my knowledge of the ſtage during the ſeven years I was articled to GARRICK, is derived from confidential converſation, it would be a weak way of recommending one ſpecies of veracity by violating another. I ſhall withold nothing, however that I may fairly communicate.

WHITEHEAD, who held the ſituation of poet laureat for many years, with conſiderable ability, wrote The *Roman Father*, a tragedy that has borne

a good rank on the theatre. It is confeſſedly taken from CORNEILLE, and except in one or two reſpects materially mended. It appeared in 1750. *Fatal Conſtancy* was a mere ſketch given to eke out FOOTE's *Diverſions of the Morning*. *Creuſa*, which is founded on the *Jon of Euripides*, and in which WHITEHEAD has introduced with great effect a youth bred up in the ſervice of the gods, and kept unacquainted with the vices of mankind, was performed at Drury Lane in 1754. It was, however, too lofty and claſſical for general effect.

The *School for Lovers*, though a reſpectable play came out to diſadvantage after The *Guardian*. It was one of the firſt attempts at what was called ſentimental comedy, which the French under the term *drame* have claſſed as ſuperior in a moral ſenſe to either tragedy or comedy; In ENGLAND it at laſt became a mere rhapſody of words. The play in queſtion is by no means of this outragious ſpecies; it is delicate, ſenſible, and to a degree impreſſive, but neither the ſituations nor the intereſt was found ſufficiently powerful, notwithſtanding it was admirably acted, to enſure it permanence. The *Trip to Scotland* was a paſſable farce and that was all. WHITEHEAD could not write ill but his attempts at comedy are rather ſketches than pictures.

JOHNSON, who has written ſo many volumes himſelf, and filled ſo many volumes written by others, can only have a very ſmall corner in this work, becauſe he wrote but one play, and that an unſucceſsful one. I could with no great difficulty go largely into his literary character which I might be tempted to do were I not under an incumbent neceſſity of paying impartial attention to all thoſe of whom I have undertaken to ſpeak. The reflections reſulting from this forbearance perhaps are pleaſurable, for it is inconceivable how like the bundle of ruſhes he ſinks more and more into inſignificance upon our nearer acquaintance.

Irene, the only play of JOHNSON, was performed by GARRICK, BARRY, Mrs. CIBBER, Mrs. PRITCHARD, and all the ſtrength of the company, and yet excited no extraordinary curioſity, or attracted any warmth of applauſe; for which the public taſte has been arrogantly arrainged by the critics, though no dramatic piece was ever uſhered into the world with more ſupport and patronage. In ſhort it was regular to preciſeneſs, and verboſe to dullneſs; and, what with the mixture of SENECA and ARISTOTLE that pervaded it, neither the critics, the author, or the actors could perſuade the public that there can be any mode of delight and enjoy-

ment but that which the heart and the underſtanding approve.

Moore, who knew how to feel as he wrote, the tendency of all whoſe productions was to cultivate truth and morality, and who, therefore, found it difficult to become a faſhionable writer, brought out two comedies and a tragedy. The *Foundling* is a play of ſterling merit. It breathes a good deal the air of Mercier. It has, however, an unfortunate reſemblance to The *Confcious Lovers* in the principal drift of the plot, and, therefore, though it has been often performed, and always with applauſe, yet it yields to Steele's play what has certainly ſuperior merit. This play was produced in 1748. In 1751 he brought out *Gil Blas*, which Garrick ſaid he had the higheſt opinion of before it came out, prefacing his declaration, as he always did upon thoſe occaſions, with a confeſſion that he had no eventual judgment, which was his way of beſpeaking an indemnity whenever his opinion ſhould turn out to be wrong. It was the ſtory of Aurora in Le Sage's novel which is difficult to be dramatized to effect*.

* One cauſe of the failure of this piece was the expoſition of a Spaniſh gentleman drunk on the ſtage, which was certainly a groſs

The *Gameſter* is exactly the *drame* of the French ſtage, except that it ends unhappily and thence becomes a tragedy in proſe. From this diſtinction the *Gameſter*, even though the audience were drowned in tears, obtained but a cold reception from the public; ſo reprehenſibly does cuſtom triumph over nature. Is it not extraordinary that the feelings dare not manifeſt themſelves but by command, and that the affections of the mind are to halt till they receive the ſignal to march in meaſure and cadence? Moore was aware of this prejudice, and therefore began his play in blank verſe, the ſubject, however, was too touching, and the grief too natural to bear this heavy and unnatural garb. He threw it off and diſcovered under it one of the moſt perfect and beautiful ornaments of the theatre.

Another cauſe of its cool reception was a more

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violation of national manners, it being well known that nothing can be conſidered as a greater diſgrace, a law having formerly exiſted that if a gentleman ſhould be convicted of even a capital offence, he ſhould be pardoned on pleading his having been intoxicated at the time he committed it; It being ſuppoſed that any one, with the ſentiments of a gentleman, would rather ſuffer death than confeſs himſelf capable of ſo beaſtly a vice as drunkenneſs. It were a pity but the cuſtom obtained in England.

natural one. The audience could not bear to be touched on the ſide of that darling vice which the play reprobated. Theſe conſiderations and the failure of *Gil Blas*, induced MOORE to perſuade a gentleman to father it. The maſk was thrown off after the fourth night; when, to ſhew what critics are, it was loudly condemned by many who had been its warm admirers while MOORE's name was concealed.

SHERIDAN, an excellent actor, a man of ſtrict honour, and a perfect gentleman, who, during part of a life of great credit and public utility, managed one of the theatres in Dublin, for the better purpoſe of conducting that kind of undertaking, wrote one dramatic piece, and altered three plays the productions of other authors. *Captain O'Blunder* was a mere juvenile *jeu d'eſprit*, but it nevertheleſs became a great favourite on the Iriſh ſtage, and it was received as a model for all the Sir Callaghans, and other characters of that deſcription, which have added ſo much pleaſantry to the ſtage. The *Loyal Subject*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, were only altered in that ſlight degree which a revival of plays ſometimes makes neceſſary, and *Coriolanus*, the laſt piece this gentleman was concerned in was a mixture of SHAKESPEAR and THOMPSON, and brought for-

ward at Covent Garden with the addition of a grand ovation.

MENDEZ, who though a rich Jew was no churl, for he was a *bon vivant* and a wit, wrote a farce called The *Double Diſappointment*, which was a pleaſant thing and a great favourite, The *Chaplet*, ſo exquiſitely ſet by BOYCE, that it, perhaps, contains ſome of the ſweeteſt and moſt delightful ſpecimens of ſimplicity in muſic that can be conceived, was greatly to the honour of Engliſh taſte eminently ſucceſsful. The *Shepherd's Lottery* alſo ſucceeded, but not in the ſame degree. Theſe pieces are by no means excellently written, but there is enough in them to ſet ſuch a compoſer as BOYCE properly to work, and he has made ſuch uſe of the opportunity that theſe are ſome of the proofs that muſic to perfection has been produced by Engliſh compoſers, and taſted by Engliſh auditors.

SMOLLET, with whoſe various publications the public are ſo well acquainted, wrote more for his amuſement than for fame. The *Regicide*. This play was refuſed, the particulars of which circumſtance SMOLLET has pleaſantly but ſeverely treated in *Roderick Random*. He was remunerated by a ſubſcription. The *Repriſals* is a farce full of broad

humour, which, as every body knows, had great ſucceſs at the theatres, at Bartholomew Fair, and every where elſe. There is alſo a piece ſet down to this author called The *Iſraelite, or the Pampered Nabob.*

GLOVER the ingenious author of *Leonidas*, wrote a tragedy called *Boadicea*, which, however it may be full of the ſcholar and the poet, has very little in it of the dramatiſt. Its merits have been diſcuſſed at large, and biſhop HERRING has very ſenſibly diſtinguiſhed its beauties and its faults. *Medea* has leſs pretenſions as a tragedy than *Boadicea.* It was written after the Grecian model, and too full of preciſeneſs and regularity for a chance of ſucceſs.

HILL, who was an excentric author of ſo voluminous a kind that nothing came amiſs to him, who, though he begged to be excuſed as to the quality of writing, beat out of ſight any author that had ever exiſted in point of quantity, ſeeming rather to have an ambition to be much than well read, produced, among the wonderful number of things he engaged in, three dramatic pieces. *Orpheus* was in RICH's hands while his pantomime, or rather THEOBALD's pantomime, was in preparation. In conſequence of which, when the latter came out, HILL

publicly and falſely attacked RICH with great virulence for having ſtolen his piece, which ſlander RICH refuted by the teſtimony upon oath of ſeveral credible witneſſes. The *Critical Minute* was acted one night only at Drury Lane. The *Rout*, was ſtill a more contemptible piece. It occaſioned from GARRICK the following diſtich:

> For phyſic and farces, his equal there ſcarce is,
> His farces are phyſic, his phyſic a farce is.

The pieces of inferior authors were The *Falſe Guardian Outwitted*, by GODSHALL, perhaps never performed. The *Raree Shew*, by PETERSON, a ſtrolling actor, *Antiochus*, by SCHUCKBOROUGH, The *Sharpers*, and The *Parthian Hero* by GARDINER, which were probably performed in IRELAND, as well as The *Preceptor of* HAMMOND, *Herod the Great*, written by PECK, *Arminius*, by PATERSON, the friend and ſucceſſor in office of THOMPSON, *Roſalind. and David's Lamentation*, by LOCKMAN, ſecretary to the Britiſh Herring Fiſhery, ſays his biographer, and one of the compilers of the General Dictionary, *Orpheus and Euridice*, neither HILL's nor RICH's, by SOMNER, and *Sancho at Court*, and The *Kiſs Accepted and Returned*, by AYRE, and *Amintas*, from TASSO, by AYRES.

WEST, an excellent writer, produced The *Inſti-*

tution of the Garter, which was not known to the ſtage till GARRICK dreſſed it out at Drury Lane. *Iphigenia in Taurus*, tranſlated from EURIPIDES, and The *Triumph of the Gout*, from LUCIAN. MORRIS wrote a tragedy, never performed, called *Fatal Neceſſity*, The *School Boy's Maſk* was written by SPATEMAN merely as a ſort of ſchool exerciſe. YARROW, an actor, wrote *Love at firſt Sight*, and *Trick for Trick*. The firſt piece a mere incident originally in Italian, afterwards in the *Magnifique*, and then in the *Buſy Body*, and the other taken from the *Match in Newgate*, and Lord HARVEY wrote *Agrippina*, a tragedy which, however, was neither printed nor acted.

DELAMAINE produced *Love and Honour*, from VIRGIL; SOMMERVILLE tranſlated *Alzira* from VOLTAIRE; JOHN THEOBALD tranſlated VOLTAIRE'S *Merope*; STEVENS, rather a collector than a writer, produced The *Modern Wife*; CUTTS wrote *Rebellion Defeated*, in which he cuts but a poor figure; LYON, in a very lamb like way, produced The *Wrangling Lovers*; BROUGHTON, with the ſtrength of his nameſake, but with very little of the ſweetneſs of a poet, produced *Hercules*, which was ſet to muſic by HANDEL; MAXWELL, a blind poet, and unfortunately a poor one, wrote The *Royal Captive*,

The *Loves of Prince Emilius and Louiſa*, and The *Diſtreſſed Virgin*; theſe pieces were actedat York at different times to raiſe money for the author.

Dr. PATRICK, an uſher of the Charter Houſe School, and ſuperintendant of HENDERIE's Lexicon, and AINSWORTH's Dictionary, tranſlated all the comedies of TERENCE; BAILLIE, another doctor, not of divinity but of medicine, wrote The *Married Coquette*; HYLAND, a farmer, wrote The *Shipwreck*; CLANCY, an Iriſhman, brought out in Dublin, *Hernon*, a tragedy, and The *Sharper*, a comedy; the latter piece was noticed by SWIFT; MORELL, who was ſecretary to the Antiquarian Society, and one of the original writers in the Gentleman's Magazine, altered and fitted from MILTON, GAY, and other authors, many of thoſe pieces, ſome ſacred and ſome prophane, which HANDEL brought out under the titles of *Oratorios*. He alſo tranſlated *Hecuba* from EURIPIDES, and *Promtheus in Chains* from ÆSCHYLUS; CUNNINGHAM, a poet and actor, whoſe paſtoral writings are deſervedly in eſtimation, brought out a farce at Dublin, called *Love in a Miſt*. WINCOP wrote *Scanderbeg*. LAMBERT, a moſt admirable ſcene painter, publiſhed a thing called The *Wreckers*; it would have been a noble acquiſition to the ſtage if his pen had been equal to his pencil.

Mrs. Hooper wrote two tragedies, and one burleſque, though her pieces were all nearer the laſt denomination than ſhe was aware of. Her tragedies were called The *Battle of Poictiers*, The *Cyclopædia*, and her burletta, *Queen Tragedy Reſtored*. Mrs. Pilkington, whoſe curious memoirs are in the uſual ſtyle of thoſe ladies who after the example of Cibber have conceived it neceſſary to apology not for their lives but the manner in which they led them, wrote, among others of her excentricties, a a thing quite in her own way, called The *Turkiſh Court*. Hawkin's whoſe biographer tries to prove his talents by inſtancing that his father was a great crown lawyer, wrote *Henry and Roſamond*, and The *Siege of Aleppo*, and altered *Cymbeline*. The originals were never performed, and the alteration were damned.

Moss, or Marriot, wrote a contemptible piece called The *General Lover*. Wilder, an Iriſh actor and manager, in order to be dabbling, brought out a piece from Dancourt called The *Gentleman Gardener*. Woodward, another dabler, produced a furious number of things, ſome of them however, as they were on the ſubject of thoſe pantomimes he brought out, were not ſo much amiſs. The titles of theſe pieces, none of which had ſucceſs but the

pantomimes, are *Tit for Tat*, *Queen Mab*, *A Lick at the Town*, *Harlequin Ranger*, The *Genii*, *Fortunatus*, *Proteus*, *Marplot in Liſbon*, altered from Mrs. CENTLIVRE, *Mercury Harlequin*, *Harlequin Fauſtus*, *Harlequin's Jubilee*, The *Man's the Maſter*, and The *Seaſons*.

HALLAM, that HALLAM whom MACKLIN killed behind the ſcenes, for which he took his trial and was acquitted at the Old Bailey, brought out at the French theatre, *L'Opera du Gueux*. BLAND produced a ſtrange thing called The *Song of Solomon*. Mrs. CLIVE, the celebrated actreſs, produced now and then for her benefit ſome new or altered piece, flimzy enough, but ſet off by her admirable performance, *Bayes in Petticoats*, *Every Woman in her Humour*, *Sketch of a fine Lady's return from a Rout*, and The *Faithful Iriſhman* are her pieces of this deſcription. STAMPER a pleaſant creature and a ſound actor, when he could be kept from the bottle, introduced a new character into *Æſop*.

Mrs. LEAPOR wrote a diſmal tragedy called The *Unhappy Father*; GREENE publiſhed two plays, which were never acted, called *Oliver Crom-*

well, and The *Nice Lady*. FRANCIS, who was a good claſſical tranſlator but a bad dramatic writer, produced *Eugene*, and *Conſtantine*, both tragedies. Mrs. CIBBER, the celebrated actreſs, tranſlated The *Oracle of St. Foix* with good ſucceſs. GORDON tranſlated the comedies of TERENCE. BOYCE, a *bon vivant* about town, who had a place in the South Sea houſe, whence have iſſued ſo many choice ſpirits, wrote a number of fugitive pieces, and a play called The *Rover*. HENDERSON, whom nobody ſeems to have known, though he has written a great deal, produced one dramatic piece called *Arſinoe*.

GEORGE ALEXANDER STEVENS, who, another DURFEY, was a *bon vivant* and a ready writer, who at pleaſure could lug in the whole heathen mylothogy to electrify men into an admiration of poetry which they were too far gone critically to examine, wrote for the ſtage, *Diſtreſs upon Diſtreſs*, never performed, The *French Flogged*, damned in the theatre and transferred to Bartholomew Fair; The *Court of Alexander*, a wretched imitation of the ſtyle of O'HARA, wretchedly compoſed by the curiouſly celebrated Dr. FISHER, and *A Trip to Portſmouth*, a muſical piece performed upon a temporary occaſion at the Haymarket. This man has been ad-

mired by thoſe who are now aſhamed of their former judgment. He made a fortune by his Lecture upon Heads, which was conſidered as a work of merit but is now reflected on with contempt. He died, however, in indigence, and had been ſo pampered by falſe praiſe that he fancied himſelf to the laſt moment a greater writer than HOMER.

SMART, another diſſipated promoter of midnight orgies, was a better writer than STEVENS, but not ſo ſolicitous to turn his excentric effuſions to advantage. He had ſtrong ſenſibility, and his fits of drunkenneſs brought him to a madhouſe, where he is ſaid to have completed a tranſlation of the Pſalms. He recovered however and publiſhed many pieces; but nothing could keep him from the moſt deplorable poverty. He wrote, for the ſtage, The *Grateful Fair*, and The *Judgement of Midas*, which are mock operas, and *Hannah*, an oratorio, a ſtrange heavy thing ſtrangely and heavily ſet by WORGAN. To the firſt of theſe pieces belong the following celebrated lines, whimſically deſcribing a conflict between love, rage, and jealouſy, which have been attributed to ſo many authors.

Thus, when a barber and a collier fight,
The barber beats the luckleſs collier white;
The luſty collier heaves his ponderous ſack
And, big with vengeance, beats the barber black;

In comes a brickduſtman, with grime o'erſpread,
And beats the collier, and the barber, red.
Black, red, and white, in various clouds are toſt,
And, in the duſt they raiſe, the combatants are loſt.

ROLT, to whom SMART was indebted for his initiation into the myſteries of Bacchus, who was originally a hackney writer to an attorney, who had the modeſty to publiſh Dr. AKENSIDE's *Pleaſures of Imagination* as his own work, and in his own name, who was concerned with SMART in the famous amuſement called *Mother Midnight's Entertainment*, who was celebrated by his congenial friend CHURCHILL, and, in ſhort, who lived and died in infamy and poverty, wrote *Eliza*, which was prohibited, The *Royal Shepherd*, which was compoſed by RUSH, and was one of thoſe pieces which *Artaxerxes* engendered, and which LACEY ſo much encouraged to no purpoſe while GARRICK was in ITALY, as we ſhall preſently ſee, and *Almena*, another thing of the ſame kind, which was compoſed by MICHAEL ARNE, and in which Miſs WRIGHT, afterwards Mrs. ARNE, ſung moſt beautifully.

De BOISSEY tranſlated MOLIERE's *Miſer*. JONES wrote The *Earl of Eſſex*, and The *Heroine of the Cave*; the laſt was finiſhed by HIFFERNAN. The *Earl of Eſſex* was popular for a time, but BANK's play at laſt triumphed over all others on this ſub-

ject, for the ſimple reaſon that feeling and ſenſibility are objects of ſuperior attraction than any other requiſites of tragedy. JONES's biographer is very angry with him for being a bricklayer, and inſiſts upon it that it is impoſſible for perſons of ſuch a deſcription to produce any writings of merit, a circumſtance which probably the gentleman forgot when he extolled BEN JONSON above all other dramatic writers.

STAYLEY brought out, at Dublin, The *Court of Naſſau*, and The *Rival Theatres*; neither of them, but for regularity, worth recording. DERRICK, who at the death of NASH became maſter of the ceremonies at Bath and Tunbridge, but who was ſo extravagant that no curb nor income was ſufficient to keep him from diſtreſs, tranſlated a piece, from the French of the king of Pruſſia, called *Sylla*. LEE, an actor, famous for ſterling merit and unaccountable ſingularity, who in any ſituation was never at peace himſelf or would ſuffer any body elſe to be ſo, altered *Macbeth* moſt miſerably, The *Country Girl* as bad, and The *Relapſe* equal to either. MORGAN, an Iriſhman, wrote a romantic thing, which he called a tragedy, under the title of *Philoclea*. CRISP belonged to the cuſtom houſe, and, about the time of the tobacco diſpute with AMERICA, wrote a tragedy called *Virginia*. Miſs FIELDING,

ſiſter to the celebrated noveliſt, wrote a dramatic novel in three volumes called The *Cry*.

Preston, an itinerant actor, wrote a deſpicable piece which he called The *Rival Father*. Mrs. Tollet produced *Suſannah*. Hart, a Scotchman, wrote a tragedy for the theatre of Edinburgh, called *Herminia and Eſpaſia*. Goodhall is ſaid to have written *Florazene*, and to have altered *King Richard the Second*; very little, however, is known of him or his writings. Brown, who was known as an ingenious author and a reſtleſs character, and who put a period to his exiſtence from impatience of temper and extreme ſenſibility, produced a tragedy called *Athelſtan*, certainly well conceived and well written, but ponderous and clogged, in conſequence of which it met with a cold reception; *Barbaroſſa*, however, which was greatly received, is probably not ſo well written, and it is beſides, too like *Merope* and other ſimilar pieces. The performance however of Garrick and Mossop, and the great ſolicitude with which Garrick brought it forward, made it an object of profit, and, indeed, reputation to the author. Browne alſo wrote The *Cure of Saul*, which was compoſed by Dr. Arnold.

Lewis, out of an inclination to make a total

change in the drama, and introduce every thing horrible, revolting, and dreadful, in the place of natural productions calculated to mend the heart and amuſe the ſenſes, wrote, for it was never performed, GARRICK was the wrong manager for his purpoſe, a moſt extraordinary piece upon the old theme of the *Italian Huſband*, which RAVENCROFT, as we have ſeen, had before treated. I ſhall content myſelf with giving a ſpecimen of the language, firſt noticing that, by was of cataſtrophe, the ſuſpected lady is compelled to take an electuary compoſed of her ſuppoſed lover's vitals.

" FORTIA. You know his lordſhip's bailiff GIOVANNI
" Lives in a farm near to his caſtle gate.
" Whilſt he at dinner ſat, a favourite hen
" Came cackling, and at's feet lay'd a live chick,
" Perfect with wings and claws, with eyes and voice,
" Which ran without delay after its mother,
" But lo! a greater wonder juſtly fills
" All hearts with horror and amazement dire:
" Juſt underneath the table th' earth gap'd wide
" And did diſcloſe a bubling ſpring of blood,
" Whence drops reſulting ſprinkled all the board.
" Fix'd in ſuſpence at this, one, from the cellar,
" Ran and declar'd the wine was in a ferment,
" Tho' fin'd before, and boil'd in every veſſel,
" As if ſet o'er a fire intenſe and large.
" Mean while a ſerpent's carcaſe they beheld
" Dragg'd out of doors, with eager haſte, by weaſels;
" A ſhepherd's bitch came gaping, from whoſe jaws
" Leap'd forth a lively, large, tunbelly'd toad;

" A ram ran full againſt a dog ſpontaneous,
" And at one fatal ſtroke brake the dog's neck."

We are not quite arrived to this; but as ours is the age of improvement on nature, there is no ſaying what may happen in time.

MONCRIEF wrote a weak tragedy called *Appius*. The *Schemers* is a piece altered from MAYNE's *City Match* by BROOMFIELD the ſurgeon. HILL, a poor bookſeller, who tried the ſtage as an actor without ſucceſs, wrote and altered four pieces; they were called The *Spouter*, *Minorca*, The *Mirror*, and The *Frenchified Lady never in Paris*. BRENAN is unknown by any work except a poor piece called The *Painter's Breakfaſt*. Mrs. HARRISON wrote a pompous piece called The *Death of Socrates*. SLADE, a lieutenant of marines, who was caſt away in the Ramilies, wrote a play, which was performed one night by his friends, called *Love and Duty*. AVERAY, an obſcure author, wrote *Britannia, and the Gods in Council*.

BACON wrote five pieces, almoſt totally unknown, called The *Taxes*, The *Inſignificants*, The *Trial of the Time Killers*, The *Moral Quack*, and The *Occuliſt*. BARNARD produced two pieces, neither of which was intended for the ſtage, called The

Somewhat, and *Edward the Sixth*. FREE wrote *Jeptha*, an oratorio, ſet to muſic by STANLEY. THOMPSON, a clergyman, wrote a tragedy never performed, called *Gondibert and Birtha*. CLELAND, whoſe genius has procured for him an infamous immortality, and whoſe laſt moments, if he was capable of compunction, muſt have been imbittered with the reflection of having being the deſtroyer of morality in the youth of both ſexes, produced three dramatic nondeſcripts, called *Tombo Chiqui*, *Titus Veſpaſian*, and The *Lover's Subſcription*.

PORTAL, who was a jeweller, afterwards a bookſeller, and at laſt a money taker at Drury Lane theatre, wrote for the ſtage *Olinda and Sophronia*, The *Indiſcreet Lover*, and The *City of Bagdad*. Lord CORNBURY wrote The *Miſtakes*. GORE publiſhed SHAKESPEAR's *Henry the Eighth* with notes. BUSHE produced a piece, probably taken from VOLTAIRE, called *Socrates*. CHAPELLE altered *Authony and Cleopatra* from SHAKESPEAR. MORTON wrote a piece called The *Regiſter Office*, to do which he tells us he was induced to ſupport a large family. As his piece was never performed except at Shrewſbury, I am afraid his family were not much the better for it.

TOWNLEY, maſter of merchant taylor's ſchool, is ſaid to have written *High Life below Stairs*. I know it has been aſcribed to this gentleman, but the letter which at that time publicly appeared ſaying that this piece "is not written either by Mr. "TOWNLEY or Mr. GARRICK," I can, if I may be guided by circumſtances, undertake to ſay is truth. HOADLEY, had certainly a hand in it, and there were other communications from perſons who were in the ſecret, but who conceived the ſubject to be rather tickliſh. That GARRICK fitted it to the ſtage there can be no doubt. MOZEEN, an indifferent actor, but by no means an inſignificant writer, produced a piece called The *Heireſs*. WHITE tranſlated The *Clouds* from ARISTOPHANES. I alſo reckon a hundred and twenty-five anonymous pieces ſince my laſt general account.

CHAP. X.

ACTORS.

THE dearth of great excellence in acting, from CIBBER's feceſſion to the time of GARRICK's approach, gave me but little opportunity of going into that ſubject, and I now take it up merely to join the chain together, ſo that the reader's view of the comparative merit of actors may be collected and undiſturbed.

Many of the actors and actreſſes ranked reſpectively, but that was all. Among theſe were, as we have ſeen, KEEN, MILWARD, the elder, and younger, MILLS, JOHNSON, BOWMAN, THURMOND, WALKER, WRIGHT, BULLOCK, and Mrs. BULLOCK, and others, moſt of whom were brought forward to ENGLAND from ASHBURY's nurſery in IRELAND, which certainly promoted very materially the intereſt of the ſtage. The public, however, were

obliged to be content with theſe and a few more till the time of FLEETWOOD, when the later ſhoots from ASHBURY's ſtock began to emancipate and expand in Engliſh ſoil.

From this time the Engliſh ſtage began to know, among many others, MACKLIN, QUIN, RYAN, DELANE, HULET, and afterwards SHERIDAN, DIGGES, SPARKS, BARRY, MOSSOP, and WOODWARD, among the men; and Mrs. BELLAMY, Mrs. CLIVE, and Mrs. WOFFINGTON, among the women; beſides Mrs. CIBBER, and Mrs. PRITCHARD, and a large addition of names ſomewhat reſpectable though leſs eminent than thoſe I have mentioned.

It ſeems to be evident that acting, having fallen off from the death of BOOTH and the ſeceſſion of CIBBER, never regained its natural tone till the public ſaw a perfect model for imitation in GARRICK. MACKLIN was ſurely a turgid heavy actor, with neither real dignity in tragedy, nor native humour in comedy. There was a ſort of preciſe ſtudied correctneſs which always reached ſufferance but ſeldom admiration, like a reader at a preſs, who goes critically over every word without feeling the ſenſe of the ſentiment, or the beauty of the writer. The acting, therefore, of that day muſt have been cold

and unnatural, for MACKLIN was the theatrical ſchoolmaſter.

QUIN, though he muſt have been an actor of much greater underſtanding and more mind than MACKLIN, was ſtill in ſtilts, and proved that though action comprehends the whole of oratory, oratory by no means comprehends the whole of acting. Greatneſs and dignity QUIN is univerſally allowed to have poſſeſſed; for a correct and commanding underſtanding, and a thorough and diſcriminating power of expreſſing the ſenſe of an author, I have always underſtood he never had a ſuperior. We are told, and I do not diſpute the truth of the aſſertion, that his manner of utterance was ſo juſt and ſuch a diſplay of that feeling which the ſentiment he pronounced conveyed to his mind, that he transfuſed an equal ſenſation of pleaſure and conviction to his auditors.

This is ſurely tranſcendent merit, yet it is only tranſcendent as far as it goes; for it is but one requiſite of a great actor; who, when he loſes ſight of the part he is performing, with all his reaſon, his underſtanding, and his judgment is no more than a performer lecturing his auditors. This actor's dignity was the dignity of QUIN, not of PYRRHUS, or

CATO; in other words, dignity of perſon, not dignity of mind, and I think we may eaſily conceive that BOOTH gave more force to the ſentiment of CATO, by aſſuming the ſuavity of the philoſopher, rather than the aſperity of the cynic.

It is impoſſible to aſſert with certainty any thing poſitive on this ſubject; we can only aſſiſt our opinions by arguing rationally on ſuch parts of it as we know to be infallible, and to form a concluſion from an impartial view of the whole. Upon this principle, with the perpetual objection in our teeth, fallacious however, that actors and their reputations die together, we can infallibly pronounce on the merit of ROSCIUS, BETTERTON, GARRICK, and others, who went for and accompliſhed a correct repreſentation of nature, but we have no guide to lead us to the degree of merit poſſeſſed by theatrical readers, and oratorical actors, any further than to conceive that they conveyed the correctneſs of their authors without manifeſting the beauty.

RYAN is ſpoken of in terms of the warmeſt praiſe by his biographer; who fancying himſelf obliged to write nevertheleſs in the language of candour, confeſſes, while he ſpeaks of his perſon and features, as the model of ſymetry and perfection,

that having firſt received a blow in the noſe in one affray which turned it out of its place, and a brace of piſtol bullets in his mouth in another which broke his jaw, theſe accidents ſo diſcompoſed his voice that he became a moſt ridiculous object of imitation, but that he remained a very deſerving ſtage favourite to the laſt.

It is univerſally acknowledged that he was a very ſenſible man, and a moſt reſpectable member of ſociety, and upon this account he was probably encouraged greatly beyond his profeſſional merit. Nobody ſeems to have known this better than QUIN; who in the moſt friendly manner, after he had retired from the ſtage performed Falſtaff regularly for his benefit once a year, till he himſelf took a hint from nature and found that the deception would not do. In ſhort in ſpight of whatever may be ſaid by thoſe who, from the beſt intentions in the world, wiſh well to the reputation of RYAN he never could have ranked on the ſtage as an actor of firſt rate abilities.

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* There ſeems to have been a great deal of this philanthrophy about QUIN. I cannot deny myſelf the pleaſure of relating two anecdotes; which, though they are generally known, will not loſe

DELANE was conſidered as a ſound good actor of a reſpectable but by no means of a firſt rate deſcription. He was particular and GARRICK ſucceſsfully mimicked him in the *Rehearſal*. BOWMAN, however, we are told had merit enough to keep alive a ſpirit of jealouſy in QUIN, though BOWMAN at that time was very old. HULET was a uſeful performer and a good ſinger. HARPER was a kind of a ſecond to QUIN in comedy, and played Sir Epicure Mammon and other parts of that deſcription with truth and ſpirit. CASHEL is ſaid to have been a promiſing actor.

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upon repetition. When QUIN found himſelf admoniſhed by age and infirmities not to appear again in public, he wrote to RYAN that he had the greateſt regard for him as a friend, but that he would not whiſtle Falſtaff for him or any man breathing, to which he added, that he had ſet him down a thouſand pounds in his will, and if his occaſions required it he was welcome to draw for the whole or any part of it during his life time. The other circumſtance relates to THOMPSON, to whom QUIN is ſaid to have introduced himſelf at a Spunging houſe, where he informed him, after a delicate and a proper introduction, that as he owed him two hundred pounds he thought he could not chooſe a more ſeaſonable moment to pay his debts. THOMPSON remonſtrated, but QUIN inſiſted upon the fact; and having prevailed upon THOMPSON to receive the money, which, probably, in that ſituation was not a very difficult taſk, he informed him that he had received pleaſure from a peruſal of The *Seaſons* equivalent to the ſum he had now reimburſed, a compliment more to his philanthrophy than to his taſte.

We have thus ſeen that QUIN, MACKLIN, and RYAN, had a ſmattering of CIBBER's ſchool, the merits of which have been already canvaſſed, and which conſiſted more, except in the inſtances of chaſte and natural repreſentation in BOOTH and Mrs. OLDFIELD, and their imitators, of the art of acting than the power of demonſtrating nature. With GARRICK came perfection; perhaps that perfection which is ſuppoſed to have died with BETTERTON; and I think it may fairly be conceived that even QUIN, afterwards, improved by that novel, becauſe natural, ſyſtem which at GARRICK's firſt appearance he had reprobated.

I have not ranked SHERIDAN with theſe; becauſe, though a manneriſt and a peculiar actor, yet he had no neceſſity to model himſelf upon the plan of any other performer, having as much genius and judgment as perhaps any one who ever trod the ſtage. It was not at all times that you would get at GARRICK's real ſentiments about acting, which indeed was no more than the pardonable duplicity of a tradeſman who is obliged now and then to be a little inſincere to puff off his wares; but he had his unguarded moments, and through thoſe I am able to aſcertain that he had made it his buſineſs to avail himſelf of the ſound ſenſe and critical diſcrimination

which marked the judgment of SHERIDAN, and I can aſſert with ſafety, which is greatly to the honour of GARRICK, and a ſtrong proof of his underſtanding, that he ſought a connection with that ſcholar and critic, in uniting himſelf with him in the management of the Iriſh theatre, as much for the purpoſe of learning to act as learning to manage.

A ſonorous voice, and an expreſſive face are very impoſing requiſites in favour of an actor; and where theſe are denied, the beſt underſtanding and the moſt critical conception are veiled and obſcured. There is ſomething, however, by which they announce themſelves. We ackhowledge the value of the ſun even in a miſt; though we do not at that time perceive its brilliancy nor feel its influence, we are only aflicted that nature ſhould oppoſe ſuch an inconvenient obſtacle to what we decidedly know would otherwiſe be capable of affording a moſt complete and ſatisfactory enjoyment; on the contrary a meteor is a momentary object of delight; but our ſenſes ſoon correct the fallacy and our admiration vaniſhes with the deluſion that created it.

Nature had certainly thrown ſuch impediments in the way of SHERIDAN, who, however, excited abundant admiration in thoſe who were judicious enough to penetrate beyond the veil and view the

commanding power of mind and ſtrength of comprehenſion with which he was internally gifted. In the powers of an actor, QUIN ſeems to have been ſuperior to SHERIDAN, in the feelings of an actor, SHERIDAN appears to have been ſuperior to QUIN. QUIN felt all he expreſſed, and therefore exceeded SHERIDAN, could SHERIDAN have expreſſed all he felt he would have ſoared above QUIN.

MOSSOP from all I can collect was a commanding but never an agreeable actor. There are various ways of convincing the mind. We are convinced by ſubtilty, by plauſibility, by blandiſhment, and by eloquence, but we can alſo be convinced by perſeverence, by confidence, by earneſtneſs, and even by vehemence. Theſe latter qualities ſeem to have been MOSSOP's mode of convincing an audience into an admiration of him which with all his pomp, his ſtiffneſs, his peculiarity and his affectation he contrived to bring about. I have heard MOSSOP praiſed for great and commanding powers in tragedy ſuch as no other actor ever poſſeſſed, and it has been inſiſted that, if he was quaint and ſtarched at times, he was at other times grand and energetic, and, indeed, that his influence over the feelings of his auditor was irreſiſtable. The mind, however, is not very fond of being threatened into pleaſure, nor are thoſe confeſſions very ſincere that are effected by

compulsion. We cannot, therefore, reasonably acquiesce in the opinions of either the admirers or deciples of Mossop. Proselytes are seldom gained by denunciations, nor do those scholars turn out brightest who have their educations hammered into them.

As the actors I have yet to name stood high in reputation after Garrick's return from Italy, except Havard, Barry, Hippesley, Collins, and some others, who certainly deserve to be spoken of with respect, but to whom it is impossible I should be expected to pay separate and particular attention, I shall mention those actresses who, up to the year sixty-three, ornamented the stage with a degree of reputation certainly upon the whole, putting Garrick out of the question, superior to the men, and equal, but most probably exceeding those ladies of whom Cibber seems to have written the eulogium.

Mrs. Cibber was a most exquisite actress. In all characters of tenderness and pathos, in which the workings of the feeling mind call for the force of excessive sensibility, she was like Garrick, the character she represented. Love, rage, resentment, pity, disdain, and all those gradations of the various passions she greatly felt and vigourously expressed. Her face, her figure, and her manner were irresistably impressive, and her voice was penetrating to ad-

miration. Actreſſes may have had more majeſty, more fire, but I believe that all the tragic characters, truly femenine, greatly conceived, and highly written, had a ſuperior repreſentative in Mrs. CIBBER than in any other actreſs. She was certainly not ſo happy in comedy, but it would be no bad compliment to the preſent day if there were any actreſs who could perform it half ſo well.

Mrs. PRITCHARD was an actreſs of more general abilities than Mrs. CIBBER. Mrs. CIBBER's acting was delightful, Mrs. PRITCHARD's commanding. One inſinuated herſelf into the heart, the other took poſſeſſion of it. Nothing could be ſo fortunate for the ſtage as this junction of different talents. It made acting, like a picture with grand breadths of light and ſhade. We have ſeen the excellence of Mrs. CIBBER; that of Mrs. PRITCHARD was unceaſing variety. Lady Macbeth, the Queen in *Hamlet*, Clarinda, Eſtifania, Doll Common, in ſhort, every ſpecies of ſtrong nature received from her a poliſh and a perfection than which nothing could be more truly captivating. CIBBER's judicious remark that the life of beauty is too ſhort to form a complete actreſs, proved ſo true in relation to Mrs. PRITCHARD that ſhe was ſeen to freſh admiration, till in advanced age ſhe retired with a fortune to the great ſatisfaction of her numerous admirers.

Mrs. Woffington was an actreſs of a moſt extraordinary kind, and in ſome parts muſt have been unrivalled. She had a bad voice, but this ſeems to have been the only impediment to her becoming ſuperlatively excellent; for though it is univerſally allowed to have prevented her from intereſting the paſſions in ſo eminent a degree as either Mrs. Cibber or Mrs. Pritchard, yet her ſuperior beauty and grace, the induſtry with which ſhe cultivated her profeſſion by obſerving the inſtructions of Cibber, getting introduced to Mademoiſelle Dumesnil, the attention ſhe paid to Garrick, and every other eligible opportunity to improve, which ſhe ſeized with ſolicitude and avidity, eſtabliſhed for her a ſolid and firm reputation. She is ſaid in Cleopatra, Jane Shore, and Caliſta, and all other parts which require a form of commanding and majeſtic beauty, to have intereſted her auditors to a degree of aſtoniſhment. She alſo greatly excelled in many comic characters, but I cannot think it an addition to her fame, or to female delicacy, that the moſt prominent of thoſe characters was Sir Harry Wildair. Reſources are a bad ſpecimen of great talents, and beauty like charity can hide defects.

Mrs. Bellamy according to regularity comes next; but this ſort of juſtice puts me out of my way, becauſe the art of ſinking is not more advanta-

geous to profe than to poetry. Mrs. BELLAMY, though an actrefs of conſiderable abilities, cannot be ranked with Mrs. CIBBER. In ſhort in what I have ſeen, though it may, perhaps, be proper to rely with diffidence on my own opinion, yet I have a confirmed criterion in the recollection of thoſe impreſſions that authors and actors have made upon their auditors; for, though in particular inſtances, where both are taken up from partiality and prejudice, ſuch judgment may have deſerved to have been arraigned, yet it is impoſſible upon reflection to miſtake thoſe deciſions which feeling has excited and conviction confirmed.

Upon this principle we can ſay of Mrs. BELLAMY that ſhe was natural, eaſy, chaſte and impreſſive; that, as far as perſon, features, voice, and conception went, none of which were by any means of an inferior deſcription, ſhe highly pleaſed and never offended; but theſe commendations, reſpectable as they rank her, would be cold and negative applied to Mrs. CIBBER, or Mrs. PRITCHARD, who commanded attention, who ſeized the paſſions and modelled them at their will, but with all this deduction the public would be at this moment be a good deal aſtoniſhed to ſee ſuch an actreſs as Mrs. BELLAMY, were Mrs. SIDDONS out of the queſtion.

As I mean to bring into one view towards the

end of this work that prodigious aſſemblage of excellent acting, which was at its height ſome time after GARRICK's return from ITALY, and has from that moment gradually declined, which opportunity will give me occaſion to exhort the actors of the preſent day to look up to the few valuable veſtiges which remain of that magnificent and ruined fabric, I ſhall cloſe this book after I have ſaid a few words of Mrs. CLIVE.

This performer, who fairly opened the book of nature, and pointed out every valuable paſſage to ſo good effect, that no actreſs in her way has completely ſucceeded who has not trod in her ſteps, and traced her through all thoſe fanciful paths to which ſhe was conducted by the goddeſs who delighted in her, had certainly moſt ſuperlative merit. We have ſeen nothing ſucceed in her various ſtyles of acting but what has been modelled after her. She created a ſort of ſchool of her own, in which Mrs. GREEN, Miſs POPE, and their imitators, ſtudied nature and effect; but this will be hereafter better exemplified when we ſee her at a time when ſhe had perfected her ſcholars; to which period I ſhall defer this ſubject, to look after the opera, muſic in general, and other points relative to the theatre as well as to the conduct of both houſes, during the theatrical interregnum.

END OF THE NINTH BOOK.

THE

STAGE.

BOOK X.

FROM 1763 TO THE DEATH OF GARRICK.

CHAP. I.

STATE OF THE OPERA AND MUSIC IN GENERAL.

As this is the warmeſt opportunity that can poſſibly occur to take up the opera, and all collateral particulars relative to muſic, I ſhall certainly avail myſelf of it, which will be the more neceſſary as it is completely a novelty; no ſuch thing having been done in any publication ſimilar to this.

I know it has been the faſhion to conſider muſic as a menial and ſervile attendant of the theatre, rather than an ally and an auxiliary. Nothing can be more uſual than to read accounts of operas and

maſques that have been performed with ſucceſs without even a ſingle hint as to who were the compoſers of the muſic, but I would beg leave to aſk if a piece were to be advertiſed, written by a pen ſuperior, could it be, to that of SHAKESPEAR, and acted by the beſt members of the ſchools of BETTERTON and GARRICK, whether the audience would not hiſs down the curtain if they were deprived of the firſt muſic?

I look upon this ungrateful contempt of muſic, in authors and managers, to have ariſen from their want of a taſte for it, and their total inability to deſcribe it. Muſic has never been encouraged but when BEARD had the management of Covent Garden theatre. What I mean to ſay is judiciouſly encouraged; for, LACEY as we ſhall ſee, aped the faſhion exactly as a guinea pig apes a ſquirrel, or a clown a tumbler. When at any other time have we ſeen a manager like BEARD competent to afford the public amuſement in this way? I have known GARRICK, and more than GARRICK, impoſed upon by experiments till it was apparent they did not know one tune from another.

What hope or expectation then can the public entertain of receiving that rational, that irriproachable

delight which the theatre is capable of affording us through the medium of muſic? If managers know not what it is, and if it is not to be known through the theatre, much leſs, heaven knows, is it to be known through the opera; a ſpectacle where the dance is the plot and the opera the epiſode*; but remarks of this complexion will come better after I have gone through an account of muſic, which, during forty years, grew into the higheſt perfection in this country and is now ſunk into inſignificance, as land when it ceaces to be fertilized degenerates into fourneſs and ſterility.

As ITALY, as well in the opinion of PURCELL as of every man who when he ſpeaks of muſic is competent to judge of it by its effects upon the heart, was the ſchool alone in which Engliſh muſic could receive congenial improvement, and as GERMANY has ever thrown an impervious gloom over our pleaſures, which has entangled our reaſon, and miſled our ſenſes into error and perplexity, which, in muſic

* An amateur, who deplored moſt pathetically this innovation, by which operas are now ſunk to nothing, was liſtening to an admirable opera which was ſo little attended to that the audience wiſhed it over with all its merit. "This is too bad," ſaid he, "ſuch exquiſite muſic to be ſo ſlighted!" "My dear friend," ſaid "a gentleman, "the rage for operas is gone by. The only chance "for ſucceſs at the opera houſe now is to lengthen the dances and "ſhorten the petticoats of the dancers."

in particular, has conſtantly introduced ſchiſms till we have been left nothing of harmony but its diſcords, ſo it will be particularly my buſineſs to watch the progreſs of this corn that once produced a fair and plentious harveſt, and the tares which have ſince completely choaked it up.

It is impoſſible for me here to go into the differences of HANDEL and BONONCINI, and the diſputes of various kinds that kept up the opera as a ſubject of perpetual contention for a conſiderable time, and which, in proportion as HANDEL turned more to oratorios, and the Italian intereſt gained ground of the German, materially brought the opera gradually to perfection. The progreſs of muſic in ITALY had been aſtoniſhing; and, though the great genius and judgment of CORELLI had in the public opinion conducted it to perfection, it was ſoon afterwards ſeen that muſic, though an imitative art, had properties immediately derived from nature which had been but little noticed, and, when noticed, were almoſt altogether rejected.

What I mean to allude to is the diſtinction between melody and harmony, two things that though they aſſiſt each other in union are completely different in their nature, whereas it is generally under-

ſtood at this moment that they both mean the ſame thing *. Compoſers, about 1720, began to feel that

* I hope I ſhall be pardoned for going into this becauſe, although there is no axiom ſo clear, no poſition ſo infallible, not one in a thouſand appears to comprehend it; nay, our dictionaries miſlead us, while the ſtrictures of the moſt ſcientific writers, though they appear to feel the fact, leave the moſt penetrating underſtanding in the dark. Look for melody in any dictionary you'll find the explanation to be "Muſic, harmony of ſound." Look for harmony you'll find "Concord, correſpondent ſentiment," and for muſic you'll find, "The ſcience of harmonical ſounds." Nothing can be ſo indefinite, while nothing can be ſo clear and ſimple as the real truth. Melody means a ſucceſſion of ſounds, harmony a combination of ſounds, and muſic the art of uniting melody and harmony, or rather of aſſiſting melody by the addition of harmony. Thus muſic of all ſtudies ought to be the leaſt complex, and it is on this account that elaborate treatiſes have done more injury to the cauſe of muſic than to any other ſtudy, becauſe, in other ſtudies, cauſes are frequently remote and hidden, and therefore demand enquiry and inveſtigation; but in muſic, where every thing is ſelf evident and apparent, the fact ſpeaks for itſelf without the aſſiſtance of an advocate or a reaſoner, and ſtands confeſſed, a plain, a beautiful, and an unſophiſticated truth. This is clearly made out by the manner in which great men have gone into the ſubject in the treatiſes that are extant; out of which prodigious number, I ſhall inſtance, which will be ſufficient for my purpoſe, RAMEAU the moſt profound perhaps of them all, ROUSSEAU the moſt ingenious, and D'ALEMBERT the moſt ſimple and faithful to truth. RAMEAU, with an eye more to ſcientific reputation than a regard to general and legitimate fame, ſhews the wonderful variety of which ſounds are capable, in terms of calculation, ſo cloſe, ſo connected, and ſo clear, that the ſcholar is aſtoniſhed to find the endleſs poſitions, elucidations, and concluſions, to be propoſed, agreed upon,

melody was an animating principle which though it

and eſtabliſhed, by a correct inveſtigation of ſuch numerous variations of harmony. ROUSSEAU, with more ſophiſtry, turns and twiſts the ſame propoſitions in all number of ways; and, making a polypus of muſic, ſhews that it may be tortured into a hundred fragments and yet every fragment retain its priſtine ſhape. What is the conſequence? RAMEAU, finding his arguments incongruous, and crude, fondly fancies he ſhall bind them together by an expedient; and, before the mind has time to diſentangle itſelf from the rhapſody in which it has been ſo long ingeniouſly bewildered, but not a ſingle moment convinced, he gravely attempts to implore a belief that every difference of opinion ought to be reconciled in the admiſſion that the fundamental baſs is exactly NEWTON's center of gravity. ROUSSEAU is not ſo fortunate; he moſt indefatigably ranſacks invention to prove aſſertions, which he certainly makes out in argument: but at length, finding that though he has been able to eſtabliſh nothing for muſic he has eſtabliſhed a great deal for calculation, he is reduced to the neceſſity of confeſſing, that a fugue after all is *Le mauvais chef d'œuvre d'un bon muſicien*. As to D'ALEMBERT the caſe is not the ſame. He volunteers himſelf on the ſubject; and, finding, ſcientific as he was, and minutely acquainted with all the ſubtilties of argument, that muſic as it had been repreſented by all thoſe who wrote before him was completely undefinable, for the ſake of the world, he ſet about ſtudying it. What was the conſequence? He found a prodigious maſs of chequered trappings and pye balled ornaments which ſhrouded, eclipſed, and ſuffocated ſomething like a form; with infinite labour and pains, he ſtript off this miſhapen and motley annoyance, and, having cleared away diſſonance, and diſcord, with thoſe enarmonic, and chromatic auxiliaries that had ſweated and ſmothered this poor unfortunate object, his ears became gradually attracted by ſome moſt delicious ſounds, which, at length he found to proceed from almoſt exhauſted melody, that like a dying ſwan was ſweetly ſinging the dirge to its approaching funeral. This treatiſe,

could exiſt of itſelf, harmony, the carcaſe which it was intended by nature to vivify, could not. In other words, that melody was the ſong, and harmony the accompanyment; and, in proportion as the judgments of muſicians began to be more ſimplified and the grand and natural effect manifeſted by the ancients in the other arts conſidered as ſubjects of imitation, which circumſtance was adventitiouſly forwarded by the ſudden appearance of many compoſers inſtructed by nature and their feelings, the true end and tendency of muſic were accompliſhed; laboured, abſtruſe, calculated harmony was rejected, and nothing but what ſerved to give appropriate embelliſhment to melody was retained.

The moment this ſyſtem was fully reſolved on,

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which is profeſſedly written to elucidate, develope, and ſimplify that of RAMEAU, which D'ALEMBERT will not allow to be a ſyſtem, has nothing for its object but the grand and ſimple poſition, that muſic conſiſts of two parts, melody, and harmony; that melody is the gift of inventing ſounds in ſucceſſion, which delight the ear, that harmony is the art of flattering the ear by the union of ſeveral ſounds together; that melody, which has always exiſted, is nature, that harmony, which is the only decoration of nature, and has been invented, is art, that, ſo far as harmony is purſued for the embelliſhment of melody, it ought to be conſidered as a friend and a preſerver, but that the moment this duty is neglected it becomes a foe and a deſtroyer.

it is aſtoniſhing how beautifully the bird muſic ſung, emancipated from its cage; but to keep to plain narrative, HANDEL, whoſe great diſadvantage, added to his ignorance of the Engliſh language, which was a great impediment to his vocal muſic, was this harmonic mania, though he turned and twiſted it about pretty well, came forward with improved excellence after his trip to ITALY, where he compoſed The *Triumph of Time and Truth*, in which he has imitated Italian baſſes almoſt to ſervility. GEMENIANI appeared the advocate of melody, TARTINI introduced an appropriate union of melody and harmony, and inſtrumental muſic dared not further intrude than to the modeſt and becoming bounds preſcribed to it by nature.

PERGOLESI, that muſical wonder; who, though we know nothing more of his compoſitions than two comic interludes, *La Serva Padrona*, and *It Maeſtro de Muſica*, one *Salva Regina*, and his immortal *Stabat Mater*, reached perfection, and therefore was poiſoned at twenty-two. GALLUPPI, who compoſed moſt ſweetly becauſe he deſpiſed extraneous harmony, deliciouſly agitated every pleaſing ſentation by his muſic. VINCI, PEREZ, JOMELLI, and a long ſtring of celebrated Italians brought this taſte to ENGLAND, and confirmed its reputation till, from about 1756, to 1766.

About this time the German taſte began again to prevail; and, though BACH and ABEL, but particularly ABEL, ſtill adhered to the perfect ſtyle in which harmony had no triumph over melody, yet the manner began by PICCINI of loading air with accompanyment, which was ingenious enough in him, but followed awkwardly and bungingly by others, ſhook that reputation which truth and nature had eſtabliſhed; and, in ſpight of the meritorious efforts of VENTO, and a few others, the ear began to be ſtunned inſtead of delighted, and muſic, that had ſo lately rouſed the affections and ſoothed the ſoul, was conſidered as deſtitute of merit unleſs it could deſcribe the confuſion of a battle, or the violence of a hurricane.

The opera having thus been conſidered as the criterion and regulator as to muſic in this country, not very properly indeed ſince muſic ought not to be ſubmitted to any criterion or regulator but the heart and its feelings, the prevalent taſte of the opera became the prevalent taſte of the nation, and thus operas, which had certainly been a national benefit, became more and more a national injury, till the theatres following this retrogade motion, not ſtep by ſtep, but halt by halt, ſidled off gradually; and leſt

the throne of muſic to be uſurped by the demon of diſcord.

As I have attributed this falſe taſte to the prevalence of German muſic, it is but fitting that I honeſtly make out my poſition. I have ſhewn, in how many periods of the hiſtory of muſic in this country, this innovation was to be dreaded. We have, in conſequence of the reſearches of the orinal printers of muſic, in the ſixteenth century, proved that documents were found which plainly ſhew that the ſtyle of muſical ſtudy would be nature in the Italians, and art in the Germans. We have ſeen ARON RAMIS and AGRICOLA loſt in the labyrinth of harmony, to which, by their own confeſſion, they knew not how to find a clue, and yet theſe men, AGRICOLA in particular, wrote leſſons for young beginners. Were not, therefore, the inextricable barbarities of the Germans then exactly what they are now?

What did ZARLINO and his followers? The cotemporaries of thoſe Germans, did they loſe nature to perplex themſelves and the world with art? No. They traced muſic to its origin, and not only felt but demonſtrated that muſic is not derived from conſtruction and calculation, but from nature and

ſimplicity. My premiſes then are clearly made out by that moſt infallible of all proofs the evidence of long experience; and, as the ſtage upon the ſame principal is now adopting every thing monſtrous and unnatural, it becomes a queſtion whether, in our inſatiable thirſt after novelty, we may not one day or other take it into our heads to diſcard art and adopt nature.

But not to loſe ſight at preſent of muſic it will be fairly aſked me whether there is no ſuch thing as melody in the compoſitions of the Germans? It would be very hard indeed if in ſuch an immenſe wilderneſs there ſhould not be a few flowers; but luxuriance was never yet a ſymptom of ſtrength or maturity. And this is the very thing I complain of; for were the Germans barren of genius, their impoſitions would be detected; whereas, by ſcattering here and there a few traits of fancy, a ſtudy of their works is ſomething like what the poets deſcribe of the road to the temple of pleaſure, which is flowery and deceitful, and which beguiles our time with idle trifling, till the night of diſappointment overtakes us, and we view the promiſed goal through the medium of deluſion, and preſently loſe it in the ſhades of obſcurity.

Melodies however theſe Germans have, but, by introducing them by fits and ſtarts, their muſic has no character, except indeed the ſort of character that a maſque has compared to a face; which ſerves to diſguiſe it by the ſubſtitution of deformity. I will not allow a work of genius to be complete in all its parts unleſs, like a perfect poem, its drift be premiſed, followed up, and concluded: and upon this ground the ſtouteſt ſtickler for the preſent faſhionable muſic, has not a ſingle argument to ſtand upon.

I cannot more clearly give an idea of theſe redundant compoſitions, and their oppoſites, than by ſuppoſing two orators: One ſhall be a man of natural eloquence, who ſupports his arguments in ſimple and perſpicuous language, who borrows no ornament but from reaſon, nor courts aſſiſtance but from truth: The other ſhall deal in metaphor, allegory, and alluſion. He ſhall wrap up the plaineſt axiom in figure, logic, and ſyſtem; in ſoaring to ſublimity he ſhall fall into quaintneſs, and in ſtriving to tranſcend, he ſhall ſink to nothing.

What muſt be the different effect on their hearers? One ſhall delight and convince, the other daz-

zle and miſlead. One ſhall win from attention the willing tribute of praiſe, the other wreſt from aſtoniſhment a mixture of admiration and pity.

Every thing the ear acknowledges as muſic is ſong. Poetry is originally ſuppoſed to have been ſung. ITALY, therefore, muſt be conſidered as the firſt muſical ſchool; vocal muſic having been ever in greater repute there than in any other part of the world, and, on that account, the Italians are leſs apt than other compoſers to go into any thing extraneous, for vocal muſic is in its nature regular. This is not the caſe with the Germans, whoſe ſtudy being almoſt wholly inſtrumental muſic, they traverſe the wide field of modulation, and quarter it as regularly as a pointer in the ſtuble: or rather, like a citizen on a Sunday, who walks out till he is tired, forgetting that he has to come home again.

This then I conceive to be the cauſe of that perverſion of taſte in this country which has unhappily obtained, and in partitular as to muſic; our national characteriſtic being warm benevolence and broad liberality, which too frequently encourages, when it ought to diſcriminate.

CHAP. II.

THE THEATRE DURING THE INTERREGNUM, AND IMMEDIATELY ON GARRICK's RETURN.

When the finiſhing ſtroke, which was no leſs than indifference and neglect, had been given to Garrick's determination of travelling for two years, that the public, which was infalliable, might feel their loſs; both Beard and Lacey, felt bold at the circumſtance. Beard, from a conſciouſneſs that, having eſtabliſhed opera upon a firm and ſolid baſis he ſhould excluſively poſſeſs the favour of the town, and Lacey, from a contempt he had ever entertained of Garrick's judgment as a manager, and a firm belief that through his fancied ſuperiority he ſhould both eclipſe Covent Garden, and lower his partner in the opinion of the public.

Both theſe effects Garrick had foreſeen, and had very early anticipated the conſequence of them. He ſaw the certain operation of all that could poſſibly be brought forward to ſupply the place of his

exertions; he saw, supported as it was by a national taste, that music would naturally make a considerable head against him; but he saw that LACEY would court the assistance of this auxiliary to the temporary disadvantage of the theatre, and that even BEARD would not be able to find a sufficient stock of materials to compensate for the loss of tragedy and comedy.

His penetration was equally keen in respect to writing and acting, which he knew must in his absence come to what the sportsmen call a complete stand still. As to the veteran writers, they so unequivocally adopted this sentiment that they patiently waited his return; and, for the novices, their certain ruin must have been the consequence of venturing any thing material in his absence. Both these effects were in a remarkable manner produced. COLMAN, whose reputation had received complete confirmation by the assistance of GARRICK in The *Jealous Wife*, had the good sense to venture at no production of a first rate kind, till his coadjutor returned; and POWEL, whom nature had endowed with many of the best requisites of an actor, by having the reins thrown over his neck, soon lost sight of the admirable lessons he had received from GARRICK, who had been his most able preceptor, and

was bewildered out of that little native judgment he he poſſeſſed, by folly, vanity, and indiſcriminate applauſe.

All this which GARRICK had foreſeen literally happened. ARNE was the only compoſer of real eminence known to the theatre at that time, for BOYCE had retired to the church. MICHAEL ARNE's muſic was always paſſable but never excellent, RUSH had juſt arrived from ITALY and knew the taſte of that country, but wanted the judgment to adopt that taſte to Engliſh ears, or rather to Engliſh hearts. BATES had bluſter, and buſtle, and could compoſe ſongs as faſt as a blackſmith can make hobnails all of the ſame ſize and quality; and, as to the reſt, they were ſtill inferior pretenders.

It is true that there were plenty of compilers, who furniſhed the theatres with lumping pennyworths; and this mode ſometimes, as in the caſe of *Love in a Village*, and The *Maid of the Mill*, was adopted with ſucceſs but never unleſs ſuperintended with judgment and aſſiſted by the original compoſition of ſome excellent muſician. *Love in a Village* though benefitted by very beautiful muſic by GALUPPI, GIARDINI, and others, received two-thirds of its value from ARNE, and The *Maid of the Mill*

being, though better aſſiſted by Italians, rather a grand than intereſting ſelection.

All this, however, was neither ſeen nor felt by LACEY; who, being accuſtomed to hear God ſave the King, Roaſt Beef, and Rule Britannia, knew there were ſuch tunes but could ſcarcely diſtinguiſh one of them from another, fancied that three compoſers muſt naturally conquer one, and therefore ſet RUSH, BATES, and MICHAEL ARNE to work, and preſently, in oppoſition to *Artaxerxes*, came out The *Royal Shepherd*, *Pharnaces*, and *Almena*.

In the mean time GARRICK received very diſmal accounts from VICTOR, the treaſurer, of the immenſe ſums ſquandered away to decorate ſerious operas on the one ſide of the account, and, on the other, a beggarly account of empty boxes of which, though it was the very effect he anticipated, he bitterly complained while he privately hugged himſelf for his own ſagacity, well knowing that the tendency of this temporary loſs would be future fame, and permanent profit.

GARRICK now began to feel a conſequence he had never known till that moment; and, excellent as his worldly acting had always been, he was aſto-

niſhed at his own power of attracting ſuch univerſal applauſe. He was wiſhed for and expected with the moſt anxious curioſity at home, while the accounts we received of him from abroad, ſome of which by the bye, by way of whetting public impatience, even went to inſituate that he meant to paſs the remainder of his life in Italy, were the honourable and flattering reception he every where met with, the invitations he continually received from Princes and Ambaſſadors, which, another ſtroke of acting, he rejected to ſort with men of profeſſional eminence, and in ſhort the great and diſtinguiſhed attention he daily experienced, ſuch as never had been paid to any other individual.

Nor was this all. He found the ſucceſs of dramatic writers as indifferent as his moſt ſanguine hopes would poſſibly have ſuggeſted; he found that, in proportion as POWEL got SHAKESPEAR in his head he loſt him in his heart; he found that his partner, having begun to give up operas as a bad thing, had, by way of retrieving his declining fortune, conceived an expectation of finding coals in Oxfordſhire, from which circumſtance he knew he ſhould get as much of the theatrical property into his own hands as he thought proper; he found, in ſhort, that the muſical mania began to be on the decline; nay he found JOHNNY BEARD deaf, and Dr. ARNE

damned, and yet, can it be credited? Such was the ſtrange crooked policy and ſingular vanity of this extraordinary man—he wrote The *Sick Monkey*.

It was well for GARRICK that the public diſpiſed this contemptible production under an idea that it was written by an inſidious enemy, otherwiſe it muſt have operated heavily againſt him; but the tide was in his favour and nothing could ſtop it. The town knew no other topic. Preſents awaited him, and every trifling circumſtance relative to him in ever ſo remote a degree was a ſubject of general converſation. In ſhort, no object of the greateſt national importance could engroſs more attention; the Royal family graced his firſt appearance, while he as contentedly ſwallowed all this adulation as an alderman does the green fat of a turtle, ſtill keeping up thoſe outward ſigns of diffidence and apparent ſelf-denial, which he ever put on, by chuſing *Much ado about Nothing* for his firſt appearance, that it might ſignify how much the goodneſs of the public ſurpaſſed his deſert. What a wonderful union of merit and modeſty; no biſhop ever repeated *Noli epiſcopari* more devoutly.*

* GARRICK prepared an addreſs to the audience, which he delivered previous to the play he firſt appeared in. When he came upon the ſtage, he was welcomed with three loud plaudits, each

He certainly, however, deſerved every attention

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finiſhing with a huzza. As ſoon as this unprecedented applauſe had a little ſubſided, he uſed every art of which he was ſo completely maſter to lull the tumult into a profound ſilence—and, juſt as all was huſhed as death, and anxious expectation ſat on every face, old CERVETTO, who was better known by the name of NOSEY, anticipated the very firſt line of the addreſs by—aw—a tremendous yawn. A convulſion of laughter enſued, and it was ſome minutes before the wiſhed-for ſilence could be again reſtored. That, however, obtained—GARRICK delivered his addreſs in that happy, irreſiſtible manner in which he was always ſure to captivate his audience; and retired with applauſe ſuch as was never better given, nor better deſerved. But the matter did not reſt here—The moment he came off the ſtage, he flew like lightning to the muſic room, where, collaring aſtoniſhed NOSEY, he began to abuſe him pretty vociferouſly. 'Wha—why—you old ſcoundrel—you muſt be the moſt infernal'—at length poor CERVERTO—"Oh! Mr. GARRICK! vat is the "matter—vat I haf do—Oh God vat it is!"—'The matter! why 'you old, damned, eternal, ſenſeleſs idiot—with no more brains 'than your damned baſs viol—juſt at the—a—very moment I had 'played with the audience—tickled them like a trout, and brought 'them to the moſt accommodating ſilence—ſo pat to my purpoſe—'ſo perfect—that it was, as one may ſay, a companion for MILTON's 'viſible darkneſs'—"Indeed, Mr. GARRICK, it vas no darkneſs." 'Darkneſs! ſtupid fool—but how ſhould a man of my reading 'make himſelf underſtood by—a—anſwer me, was not the whole 'houſe, pit, box, and gallery, very ſtill?' "Yes, Sir, indeed—ſtill "as mouſe." 'Well then, juſt at that very moment did you not, 'with your damned jaws extended wide enough to ſwallow a ſix-'penny loaf—yaw?—Oh I wiſh you had never ſhut your damned 'jaws again.' "Sare, Mr. GARRICK—only if you pleaſe hear me "von vord. It is alvay the vay—it is indeed, Mr. GARRICK—"alvay the vay I go when I haf the greateſt *rapture*, Mr. GAR-"RICK." The little great man's anger inſtantly cooled. The cunning readineſs of this Italian flattery operated exactly contrary

that could poſſibly be paid to him. His abſence had ſhewn, that without him the theatre could exiſt but not live, and on that return, which, for the remainder of his management, enſured the ſtage a large flow of health and vigour, no wonder he became more than ever the theme of univerſal admiration.

Having now turned to as the ſailors call it and gone in earneſt to work; materials of courſe flocked in upon him from every quarter, and he even began to have a better choice of new goods than he had been in poſſeſſion of ſince he had become manager.* With theſe advantages, ſeconded by the ex-

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to the laſt line of an epigram—the honey was taſted and the ſting forgot—and it not only procured NOSEY's pardon, but forced a declaration from his patron that he ought to be forgiven for the wit of the offence.

* LACEY in this buſineſs played off a ſtroke of policy which his partner with all his warineſs had not foreſeen. As ſoon as he had given the matter breathing time, GARRICK repreſented to LACEY the prodigious ſucceſs he had met with, and that the public would not be ſatisfied, unleſs they ſaw him twice a week at leaſt. "Well, "and what then" ſaid LACEY. "Hey, what then? Why then, what "do you mean to allow me for the advantages the concern will reap, "in addition to thoſe derived from my return to the management, "by my acting?" "Why," ſaid LACEY, "I have been thinking "of this DAVID and I won't allow a halfpenny. Play and gratify "your vanity, or let it alone, and let the theatre take its chance.

ertions of his company, who were glad enough to welcome his return that ſomething like regularity might be reſtored, he ſet himſelf buſily forward, and ſaw each department conducted with every poſſible propriety, and decorum. Inſtead of the indecency, profligacy, and debauchery, that had been known at different periods to characterize the green rooms, the dreſſing rooms, and the avenues of the play-houſe, the manners of the actors and the actreſſes were unoffending, polite, and elegant; and nothing appeared in the conduct of the theatre but might have graced a drawing room. It is but juſtice alſo to ſay, that during BEARD's management of Covent Garden, every poſſible attention was paid to propriety and decorum.

" If you play, we ſhall have broken legs and arms, and cries of " murder, to amuſe us two evenings in the week; and on the other " four evenings, there will be nobody in the houſe. If the common " buſineſs goes on, the receipts will be leſs but they will be regular, " and the average every Saturday will be pretty nearly the ſame." GARRICK, totally unprepared for this thruſt, did however all in his power to parry it, but LACEY remained inflexible, and, if GARRICK's aſſertions are to be credited, he never had any ſtated emolument.

CHAP. III.

GARRICK, AS AN AUTHOR, RESUMED.

As an examination of the merits of authors and actors, will naturally bring out all that will be neceſſary now to relate concerning the ſtage, and my limits are verging towards a cloſe, I ſhall go on with authors and ſuch collateral particulars as are involved in a deſcription of their works.

The firſt dramatic undertaking GARRICK engaged in after his return was the production of a play, in conjunction with COLMAN, who had given ſtrong proof both of genius and judgment in The *Jealous Wife*; he had given alſo proof of deference, modeſty, and good ſenſe, in permitting GARRICK to teach him his trade, for it proved in the event that COLMAN was never ſo good a dramatic writer as while he had GARRICK at his elbow.

GARRICK's ſhare of this play The *Clandeſtine Marriage*, was Lord Ogleby, and the courtly family, COLMAN's, Sterling, and the city family, and

it is aſtoniſhing how the two men appear in their ſeparate taſks. COLMAN has chaſtely and accurately delineated character, GARRICK has added to ſtrong character, ſtrong ſituation; and, to add to this conſummate knowledge of ſtage effect, how admirably well it was got up!

It is really honourable to letters, and to the nation, that the theatre could be capable of furniſhing ſo rational a treat, ſo greatly perfect and excellent in all its parts; ſo unaffectedly attractive, as this play; which, though GARRICK only ſuperintended it, was acted to perfection. I don't make this remark as a ſingularity, for many pieces at that time deſerved this praiſe. I only mean to prove that, when we conſider the incomparable acting of KING, which, like a ſingle jewel reſcued from the plunder of time, is now preſerved to us with equal brilliancy, his mixture of gout, folly, pleaſantry, philanthropy, debility, and dignity, put on with ſuch fancy and worn with ſuch elegance—

When we reflect on that aſtoniſhing creature Mrs. CLIVE; who, if ſhe herſelf had written the part as the portait of a real character, and, not content with this, had infuſed herſelf into this real character, could not have been more in nature—When we go on and ſpeak of the chaſte propriety and

ſound good ſenſe of YATES, the pert, vulgar conſequence ſo naturally and characteriſtically aſſumed by Miſs POPE, the accommodating ſervility of BADDELEY, than whom nobody ever performed that particular foreigner, a Swiſs, ſo well, as GARRICK perfectly knew, the eaſy, familiar impertinence of PALMER, not the late PALMER, but his predeceſſor.

When we add to all this, that the play was ſtrengthened by HOLLAND in Melville, and POWEL, in Lovewell, that Mrs. ABINGTON performed one of the chambermaids, and that the inferior parts, even to the counſellors, witneſs the admirable performance of LOVE in Serjeant Flower, were ſupported moſt ably, I cannot reſiſt a belief that the ſtage at any time whatever could not have been in a ſtate of higher perfection as to acting; for the merits of every performer I have mentioned were of ſuch ſuperior excellence that the parts be what they might, could not degrade them, and the public accorded their applauſe to HOLLAND, and POWEL, as much for the good ſenſe and condeſcenſion in accepting parts below their uſual ſtandard, as for the intrinſic merit they diſplayed under ſuch diſadvantages, and it heightened their opinion of Mrs. ABINGTON, in whom they plainly ſaw, under the

eaſe of Betty the chambermaid, that merit which afterwards perfected into the elegance, grace and faſhion, of Lady Betty Modiſh.

The *Country Girl*, which was performed in 1766, was a judicious altercation of WYCHERLEY's *Country Wife*. As it is now frequently performed and the public have had many recent opportunities of judging of its merits, I ſhall only ſay that every thing has not yet been done which might have been to the advantage of that ſubject. *Neck or Nothing*, almoſt a literal tranſlation of LE SAGE's *Criſpin Rival de Son Maître* deceived GARRICK when he read it in the French, as it would have done any perſon, for it there ſeems to be the very ſort of farce to pleaſe on the Engliſh ſtage. The event however, did not juſtify the experiment, though it was admirably performed.

Cymon, a piece written to diſplay thoſe ſcenic effects which GARRICK had witneſſed in France, and Italy, was in itſelf a weak production but it was neither without intereſt nor pleaſantry. There was always a want of conſequence in thoſe firſt pieces, which were the ſole production of GARRICK, his pen was not equal to more than a farce. The performance, however, was powerfully ſuſtained; and among other material advantages, MI-

CHAEL ARNE, by copying the manner of his father, and thinking of BOYCE as he compoſed, produced a number of ſweet airs, particularly thoſe ſo deliciouſly ſung by his wife.

A Peep behind the Curtain, came out in 1767, with good ſucceſs.* It was a fair ſatire, indeed rather an admonition, than a caſtagation; it hit but it did not wound; beſides which, there are ſome things in it irreſiſtably comic, particularly the circumſtance of making the old man dance againſt his will. This piece was incomparably performed,

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* GARRICK who always knew conſequences, felt that the old vehicle of dramatic ſtrictures and mock rehearſals, had been generally received with a ſort of jealouſy and revolt. He therefore beſpoke the favour of the town in a moſt artful manner. KING ſpoke the prologue, in which there was this line,

I THOMAS KING, of King-ſtreet, am the poet.

The fact is, this admirable performer was the Bayes of the piece; but this equivocal aſſertion, which nine-tenths of the audience took literally, gave a warmth to the applauſe which was of infinite aſſiſtance to the firſt nights reception. GARRICK had practiſed ſomething like this with ſucceſs before. *Cymon* came out after the public had been deprived of KING's exertions for ſome weeks, in conſequence of his having broken his thigh. They were glad enough naturally to hail the return of their favourite, which GARRICK took the advantage of, by making KING, in the prologue, thus beſpeak the public favour, in favour of himſelf. I believe the laſt line was, for I quote from memory,

Scarce well of one, ſpare me, a ſecond, tumble.

and the muſic, which was compoſed by BARTHELEMAN, and which had a mixed character of Italian, French, and Engliſh, produced a degree of novelty which gave it good effect.

The *Jubilee*,* a ſpectacle, in which were in-

* As the *Jubilee* was a memorable epoch in the reign of GARRICK, it would be unpardonable to ſpeak of it without noticing ſome of thoſe curious circumſtances that attended ſo extraordinary a buſineſs. Nothing can be more evident than that SHAKESPEAR might have laid very quietly in Stratford church, nobody would have diſturbed his aſhes, had not ſuch a popular meaſure been the probable means of inſuring a plentiful harveſt to *Drury-Lane* on the following ſeaſon. And yet, it was *managed* with ſo much caution, ſo much wariueſs, that, according to the repreſentation of the matter to every body who was concerned in it, there did not appear any ſuch thing in agitatton. This cautiouſneſs anſwered two purpoſes—it not only drew many to Stratford who would otherwiſe have ſuſpended their curioſity till they ſhould have ſeen it in London, but it ſerved as a feaſible excuſe for requeſting every body's trouble and attendance for nothing. In ſhort, GARRICK, in relation to the *Jubilee*, manœuvred every where, and with every body. He procured abuſe to be inſerted in the papers, which he got all his friends to anſwer. He enliſted a prodigious number of volunteers, whoſe exertions he pretty liberally exacted, at their expence; and at length performed the ſame entertainment ninety-five times, in one ſeaſon, at *Drury-Lane*, which he ſent people an hundred miles *not* to ſee. Indeed it was impoſſible it ſhould be ſeen; for, had the pageant been attempted at Stratford, the ſtreets were ſo uneven that the cars of Melpomeme, Thalia, and the Fairies, would have been overthrown into chaſms in the pavement; beſides the leather, tinſel, and ſpangled trappings, would have cut a lamentable figure by day-light. It is true they heard GARRICK, an advantage worth ten times the money, repeat ſo exquiſitely

troduced characters in SHAKESPEAR's plays, was performed as every body knows, more than half the ſeaſon of 1769, and 1770; a circumſtance certainly unprecedented in the annals of the theatre. *King Arthur*, was brought forward in 1771, and aſſiſted by ſcenery, and moſt judiciouſly improved, as to the muſic, by ARNE, who greatly to his honour, though according to GARRICK's plan, he was obliged to introduce ſome muſic of his own, ſo far from mutilating PURCELL, reſcued thoſe beauties from oblivion, which time and ignorance had before obſcured. ARNE idolized PURCELL, and it was his pride in this particular inſtance, to place him in that conſpicuous ſituation the brilliancy of his reputation demanded. GARRICK's view in bringing

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his ode, which poem FOOTE pronounced excellent when he heard it, and execrable when he read it, and they heard ARNE's exquiſite muſic to that ode; and, to ſay the truth, the dinners, and all the circumſtances relative to them were pleaſurable, if we indeed except the fire-works, the horſe-race, and the maſquerade. The laſt in particular, was inconvenient and diſtreſſing beyond deſcription, for the booth being built on a ſwamp cloſe to the river, and nobody having conſidered that ſometimes in the month of September it rains, the company had ſcarcely aſſembled, when the wet began to ooze through the crevices; in five minutes after they were paddling in the wet; five minutes after that it was over their ſhoes, and preſently they were obliged to take to the benches, then to the orcheſtra, and then to the windows—thus there was not a creature out of about four hundred people that eſcaped being wet through.

out this piece was to perform the ſame duty by DRYDEN.

Hamlet, was, in the ſame ſeaſon, with great diffidence, altered by GARRICK, in compliance with the judgment of a hoſt of critics, who have ſo often ſuggeſted a neceſſity of getting rid of Oſtric, the grave diggers, and as much as poſſible of the lighter parts of the play. The critics, however, on the other ſide of the queſtion, began to conſider him like Bottom the weaver, who wiſhes to play all the piece. After a very few nights it was withdrawn. The *Inſtitution of the Garter*, was brought out in honour of that ceremony at Windſor. GARRICK uſed WEST's materials, and added a Fool, and ſome other comic characters. It was performed twenty-ſix nights a run at leaſt, equal to its merits.

The *Iriſh Widow*, performed in 1772, grew popular through the exertions of Mrs. BARRY, to whom GARRICK moſt pompouſly dedicated it. It is extraordinary, that he, who better than any man, knew it to be bad policy, ſhould be ſo fond of deprecation. The *Chances*, in which GARRICK performed Don John ſo incomparably, and in which performance he was ſo ably aſſiſted by Mrs. ABINGTON, then in the zenith of her reputation, was produced in 1773, and is only BEAUMONT and

FLETCHER's play with appropriate alterations. *Albumazor* was performed the ſame year. It was an alteration of the old play, as I have before ſtated. It had no ſucceſs. *Alfred* came out the beginning of the following ſeaſon; it had great ſupport but little ſucceſs. The muſic was conſided to the care of THEODORE SMITH, who had better have let ARNE alone, ſince he had not the ability to treat him as ARNE had treated PURCELL in *Arthur*.

A *Chriſtmas Tale* appeared in 1774. The ſubject was *la Fee Urgelle*, of FAVART, which BEAUMONT and FLETCHER had treated, under the title of *Woman Pleaſed*, but which had a much more ancient date. This piece was full of magic, and intended, like *Cymon*, to give advantage to ſcenery and decoration; a circumſtance which GARRICK had adopted with great caution after the *Chineſe Feſtival*, till his return from Italy.* LOUTERBOURG was at that

* Though I would not place this ſpectacle under the head of dramatic pieces, it will not be improper to ſay a word or two concerning it. The *Chineſe Feſtival* was a grand ballet, indeed nothing more than has been always conſidered as admiſſible at the opera, and indeed at the theatre, except in that one inſtance, produced by NOVERRE, the VESTRIS of that day. It took eighteen months in its preparation, and was expected to eclipſe every thing that had been ſeen of its kind, but unluckily we had juſt declared war againſt France, and popular prejudice prevailing, the ſpectacle was damned without mercy; the theatre was mutilated, and an attempt made to pull

time firſt known in this country, who wanted completely, with great propriety, to alter the ſyſtem of ſcenery which always had prevailed, and indeed it does in a great meaſure yet prevail; but GARRICK, finding the new ſyſtem very expenſive, would not adopt the whole of it, and therefore, though ſcenes were improved, the evil has not to this day been completely cured. This piece has been moſt unmercifully handled, and heaven knows it was poor enough, but where ſpectacle only calls in aſſiſtance from the relative acts, if the piece be of that character that admits it, there certainly is not ſo much

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GARRICK's houſe down. Did this ſpirit prevail rationally it might do ſervice, but why one ſpectacle of this nature ſhould be interdicted to the toleration of ſo many others, is an inſtance of ſupererogate criticiſm, a kind of intruding juſtice, that can ſpring from nothing but abſurd and unfair prejudice. FOOTE ridicules this very well in the *Minor*, where he makes SHIFT ſay, ſpeaking of his ſituation as a candle-ſnuffer, that he acquired intrepidity, "but," ſays he, "an unlucky "crab apple applied to my right eye, by a patriot gingerbread baker "from the Borough, who would not ſuffer three dancers from "Switzerland, becauſe he hated the French, forced me to a preci-"pitate retreat" I have often lamented that the beauties of real claſſical writers are ſeldom taſted by the erudite. FOOTE, who often really meant more than met either the eye or the ear, had in this ſpeech an idea of Military Gaſconades. The ball that ſtruck the French General CREQUI, was ſaid to have had a label with the words, "A CREQUI." This, ſays the French author who relates the circumſtance, is like the arrow that deprived PHILIP of Macedon of his eye, which was addreſſed, "*A l'oeil gauche de Philip.*" Nothing can be better burleſque than this.

injury done to the public as by the exhibition of ſinery, monſters and gewgaws. I dont care how much the Dramatiſt employs the painter. My quarrel to him is when the taſte of the town is to be regulated by the property man.

Bon Ton, which is *High Life Below Stairs* reverſed, is a farce of conſiderable merit. It was performed in 1775. *May Day* was a mere trifle, it had very little ſucceſs. There were two or three preludes written by GARRICK, and Prologues and Epilogues out of all number and reckoning, which though they cannot be quoted for excellent poetry were nevertheleſs full of excellent point.

CHAP. IV.

FOOTE, AND MURPHY RESUMED.

I SHALL now return to thoſe authors, an account of whoſe works remains to be completed. We left off FOOTE at the MAYOR OF GARRATT. His next piece was The *Patron*, brought out in 1764. The ſubject is from MARMONTEL, which COLMAN had an idea of treating, but was foreſtalled by FOOTE. This comedy had pretenſions to more favour than it received; perhaps its cool reception was owing to its want of that perſonality which he had taught the town to grow pleaſed with. It is true, the principal character was intended for a nobleman whoſe follies were known to the literati, but the public at large were ſtrangers to them.

The *Commiſſary*, the next piece of this writer, performed in 1765, was of another complexion. Here was character and perſonality enough. This co-

medy, though it muſt be confeſſed, the beſt writers of that day held it in contempt, the town greatly approved. It is more a melange, and a patch work play, than almoſt any thing upon the Engliſh Stage. The *Commiſſary* is *Le Bourgeouis gentilhomme* of MOLIERE, from which author, many other parts, and particularly the orator, who in the original, which is better than in FOOTE, after he is locked out of the door, harangues from the window, is alſo taken.

This is not all. The whole of the plot which relates to Mrs. MECHLIN, is ſtill a ſtronger plagiary, for it is rendered almoſt word for word from *La Femme d'Intrigue*, and bits and ſcraps from other pieces of D'ANCOURT. Nay, the old widow who wants a young huſband is not omitted, nor even the muſic-maſter, nor the circumſtance of ſending the child home in a baſs viol.* It cannot be denied, however, that there is much pleaſantry in the piece, but ſtill that wanton perſonality that pervades it, devotes it to execration in all honeſt minds.

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* What I particularly allude to is the character of Dr. CATGUT, which was levelled at ARNE, who had peculiarities, and what man who ever lived has been without them? but perhaps upon earth never breathed a being of more honourable principles. I ſhould

The *Devil upon two Sticks*, which was produced in 1768, contained a good deal of general, and a good deal of perſonal ſatire. For the vehicle, its author had, as every body knows, to thank LE SAGE; and, for many parts of the piece he had obligations to MOLIERE. The controverſy between the Fellows and the Licentiates of Warwick-lane, was fair game, and Dr. LAST, which it is ſaid was actually a living character, and which was ſo wonderfully performed by WESTON, is that ſort of perſonality which may be tolerated, becauſe the object was obſcure, and the drift was general admonition for the cure of folly. Other objects, however, had better have been left alone. Knavery will never be corrected by the expoſition of one notorious knave, except by law; nor will intrigues of a court wear a new face by informing an audience, rather indecently by the bye, that a commoner has been diſgraced by accepting a coronet.*

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be the moſt ungrateful wretch that ever exiſted, even though it may, perhaps, be deemed intruſion, if I did not force this truth upon the Reader. ARNE reſcued my muſical fame and character, and eſtabliſhed both when his fiat might have cruſhed me, and all this with ſcarcely a perſonal knowledge of me. I have known him the warm and liberal friend of others. He had no radical fault in the world; but his mind was weak, and he was perpetually impoſed upon, and is this a reaſon why a man who has left behind him a moſt ſplendid profeſſional reputation is to be publicly expoſed at the moment he was getting his bread by the public? Mimickry is at beſt a poor act, but it becomes infamy when it attempts to wound the peace of individuals.

* FOOTE has now and then felt this ſeverely, the taking one Lord for another in this piece had very nearly damned it.

The *Lame Lover* was performed in 1770. It had a good deal of the ſort of merit which characterized this authors pieces, that is to ſay aſperity and good writing; but the ſtring may be wound up till it cracks. Health, and property, are objects of great ſolicitude in this and every other country, but this does not prove that there is no fair game for the Stage but Phyſicians and Lawyers. The *Maid of Bath* acted in 1771, ought to have been hiſſed off the Stage, not as a dramatic production, for it is one of the pleaſanteſt pieces by this writer, but becauſe it was an unwarrantable and ſcandalous attack on a family, who were the more likely to feel the injury, by being in a public ſituation. It is certainly beſt when it can be practicable to treat unprincipled malignity, like this, with contempt; but the world in ſuch caſes ſhould be the arbitrator, and do juſtice to individuals. That this ſentiment was felt, the firſt nights reception of this piece evinced; indeed FOOTE's pieces were generally very nearly damned the firſt night, though they grew afterwards into fame. The fact is, what is every body's buſineſs is nobody's buſineſs, and thus harmleſs and unoffending characters are held up to deriſion, to fill the pockets of profligate ſatiriſts.

The *Nabob*, performed in 1772, is a play ſtrongly

written, and boldly drawn, and upon a ſubject, had it been generally treated, which might have come within the province of the ſtage; but the Theatre is no court of enquiry, and it was extremely indecent to judge a cauſe before an audience which was at that moment agitating in the Senate. It was unhandſome and unjuſt, to excite a general odium againſt a body, by the expoſition of a ſingle character; but theſe were the means by which this ſatiriſt is ſaid to have caught the living manners, which aſſertion is falſe; he never caught the living manners at all, he only caught the peculiarities of a few living individuals.

Piety in Pattens was produced in February 1773, to eke out a ſpectacle, which FOOTE had long promiſed the town, under the title of The *Primitive Puppet Show*, and in which he pronounced an exordium, celebrated at that time as the achmé of eloquence, genius, and erudition, but afterwards found to be a mixture of hiſtorical narrative, abuſe againſt the other Theatres, and a promiſe of excellence at his own, that never was kept; for, to uſe the words of an Iriſhman upon the occaſion, the entertainment was all exordium. Any other author would have had his Theatre pulled down for this impoſition. The *Bankrupt* had for its driſt the expoſition of thoſe

nefarious members of ſociety, who manufacture artificial failures, and ſyſtematically evade the bankruptcy laws. It alſo went into the arcana of doing newſpapers, both which objects were clearly fair game It was ſucceſsful; and except in a few trifling particulars, deſervedly ſo.

The *Cozeners*, which play we find again a good deal from D'ANCOURT, and in which alſo we are perpetually put in mind of FACE, SUBTLE, and DOLL COMMON, in the Alchymiſt, was one of FOOTE's boldeſt pieces. If Lord Cheſterfield and his graces had been laudably attacked, there could not have been found a fairer object of ſatire, becauſe it was not a reprobation of the man, otherwiſe than as it concerned a foul and poiſonous ſyſtem that he had diſſeminated; but merely to bring on a clown and put him perpetually in mind of the graces, was leaving the improper tendency of the publication where he found it. Mrs. SIMONY was an unwarrantable attack. Strike at the vice with all my heart, but let the individual receive his puniſhment from the hand of juſtice. It is not for the Stage to ſupercede the practice of the Courts; and, if the laws have determined the neceſſity of eſtabliſhing ſober, ſolemn enquiry into the perpetration of crimes, and if after all the innocent have ſometimes ſuffered

for the guilty, ſhall the characters of men lie at the mercy of a prowling ſatiriſt, and their fame be deſtroyed by the daſh of a pen? No man can defend the meaſure, for it is not only a libel on the man, but on the government by which he is protected.

The *Capuchin*, performed in 1776, is an aggravation of all this author's former temerity, for to ſhameleſs impudence, it added deſpicable cowardice. To attack and expoſe to public ridicule, a woman! It was too contemptible. But Foote ſeems to have ſtudied his own ſafety through the whole of his conduct; having choſen characters either ſo independent, that he excited only their contempt, or ſo inſignificant as to be ſheltered by kindred puſilanimity, and this grew on him, for, in the *Cozeners*, he was protected by Dr. Dodd's gown, and in the *Capuchin*, by the Ducheſs of Kingston's petticoat.

Thus have I, with ſome pain, becauſe the merit of Foote was equal to any undertaking had he purſued the right road, examined the dramatic works of this author, which I have conceived it my duty to hold out as a beacon to warn others of thoſe rocks Foote ſplit upon, in his attempts to emulate

ARISTOPHANES, whoſe moral character has been devoted to execration and contempt, and introduce that vicious and licentious perverſions of broad truth and univerſal morality on the Engliſh Stage, which even the wonderful genius of MENANDER was unable to recover, and by which the Grecian Stage degenerated more and more; till at length it was loſt in the wreck of the Grecian Empire.

We now return to MURPHY, who produced at Covent-Garden, in 1764, on the ſame evening, a Comedy, called *No One's Enemy But His Own*, and a Farce, under the title of *What We Muſt All Come To*; two miſnomers. A man, who is an enemy to morality, and the exerciſe of it in all mankind, cannot be ſaid to be no one's enemy but his own; nor are fighting and ſquabbling for trifles what neceſſarily we muſt all come to in marriage during the honey-moon: The laſt piece was the beſt, and perhaps was damned for being in bad company. It has, however, given repeated pleaſure ſince, under the title of *Three Weeks after Marriage*. The *Choice* was a Farce hurried up for the benefit of Mrs. YATES.

The *School for Guardians*, a Comedy, performed at Covent-Garden in 1767, was taken from three of

MOLIERE's plays. The materials were good in their kind, but they made up a ſtrange incongruous maſs, when mixed together. The Play was performed but ſix nights.

Zenobia was a tragedy which had great ſucceſs. The opportunity MURPHY had at that time of wri-ing for the BARRY's was of great conſequence to his reputation and their's. It cannot be denied that the fault of pompous language pervades this, as well as the reſt of this author's tragedies; but ſtrong effect, by no means ſtrange or unnatural, was eminently their characteriſtic.

MURPHY's next piece was the *Grecian Daughter*, on which a variety of opinions have been ventured. It has been an acted pantomime, virtue outraged, and a great deal more, but no obſervation has been able to controvert one plain fact, which is, that it has been long a favorite of the public; that the grand incident on which the plot hinges is ſimple, and natural, and begets a moſt extraordinary degree of intereſt.

The ſubject is the old ſtory of the *Roman Matron*, and the author is candid enough to confeſs that he

in some degree availed himself of the *Zelmire* of Belloy.* He might perhaps have gone further, and traced the subject to Metastasio, from whom Belloy took his play.†

Alzuma, 1773, had the fault of the *School for Guardians*. It was a mixture of three French tragedies, as that had been of three French comedies, consequently the author endeavoured to reconcile those jarring interests without effect. It was just permitted on the stage, where it lingered nine nights and then expired.

Know your own Mind, performed in 1777, is a comedy of considerable merit. It had a long run during the season in which it was produced, and has been repeated frequently with good effect.

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* I have heard, and I believe my authority is pretty good, that the first idea of writing this play was suggested by a picture, which the author accidentally noticed as he was waiting in the room of a celebrated painter. In this picture the centinel, as he witnessed the interesting scene of the daughter suckling her parent, bursts into tears.

† Belloy was called the dramatic thief. He was, however, a favourite of Voltaire, who answered, when he heard a critic accuse Belloy of pilfering from him; "*Ah, le cher voleur! Il m'a bien embelli!*"

With this comedy I finish my account of MURPHY's dramatic productions; an author who studied stage effect very happily, and whose writings, whether in tragedy, comedy, or farce, never outraged nature, nor wounded morality.

CHAP. V.

HAWKESWORTH, HUME, FRANKLIN, BICKERSTAFF, HIFFERNAN, ARNE, KENRICK, GENTLEMAN, REED, AND LOVE.

As thoſe authors, who wrote principally after 1763, and but little before that period, had better, for the ſake of a general review of their productions, come in this place, I ſhall bring them now under a regular review.

One of theſe was Hawkesworth, celebrated for ſeveral works of great ingenuity. For the ſtage he altered *Amphytrion*, from Dryden, at the deſire of Garrick, but introduced very little of his own, the principal part of what he ſupplied being from Moliere. It did very little.

Oroonoko was altered from Southern, by Hawkesworth, by leaving out the whole of the comic

ſcenes. A vacuum that required much more than he has ſupplied, admirable as his writing is, though not equal to SOUTHERN'S, to fill it. The intereſt was beautifully kept alive in the original by the relief, bad as it was, the author had given it. The Planters were in nature and material to the plot, though it muſt be confeſſed they were groſs. It was difficult to protract the principal ſtory; and, however meritorious the attempt, ſo both HAWKESWORTH and the public felt it. *Edgar and Emmeline* was an elegant piece; but changing of ſexes has always ſomething in it prepoſterous and revolting, unleſs contrived for ſome comic purpoſe.

When we talk of HUME, we always add, the author of *Douglas*, a play that ever was, and ever will be ranked among thoſe of firſt rate merit, though it muſt be confeſſed it is the leſs intereſting becauſe of its reſemblance in the cataſtrophe to many other things. The language is, however, beautifully poetic. GRAY calls it the true language of the ſtage; and adds, that though it has infinite faults, the ſcene between Matilda and the old Peaſant is ſo maſterly, that it ſtrikes him blind to all the defects in the world.

Agis was finely acted and aſſiſted by ſpectacle,

otherwiſe it is probable it would not have been performed a ſecond night. GRAY, who loved HUME as a writer, ſays of this play, "I cry to think that "it be by the author of *Douglas*: why, it is all "modern Greek. The ſtory is an antique ſtatue "painted white and red, frized, and dreſſed in a "negligee made by a Yokſhire mantua maker." The *Siege of Aquileia*, performed in 1759, had ſucceſs; and as to the writing, it certainly is, in many places, very fine: but for a ſiege, it is a tame buſineſs; and, ſo far from being a reſemblance to the memorable circumſtance it ought to deſcribe, it is actually the deſcription of the Siege of Berwick, in the reign of Henry the Third.

The *Fatal Diſcovery* was performed in 1769. HUME had certainly by this time greatly fallen off as a writer. This tragedy was reluctantly permitted during nine nights; and ſo was *Alonzo*, which play, through Mrs. BARRY's admirable acting, deceived the audience on the firſt night into a high opinion of its merit. HUME ſays, in his preface, that ſhe received applauſe greater than ever ſhook a theatre. *Alfred*, the laſt production of this author, lived only three nights. In ſhort, *Douglas* is equal in value to all the reſt of HUME's works.

FRANKLIN, a voluminous writer and tranſlator, but who, like many other men of literary conſequence, is ſuppoſed to have lent his name to book-ſellers, than which nothing can be more reprehenſible, for it is actually literary ſwindling, is ſaid to have tranſlated the works of SOPHOCLES and VOLTAIRE, and to have either written, or tranſlated, the following plays.

The *Earl of Warwick*, performed in 1767, was little more than a direct tranſlation of *Le Comte de Warwick* of LA HARPE. Mrs. YATES performed Margeret of Anjou incomparably. *Oreſtes*, produced in 1769, from VOLTAIRE, was performed for Mrs. YATES's benefit. *Electra*, from VOLTAIRE's play, which he ſtole from *Hamlet*, after having abuſed SHAKESPEAR, was performed in 1774, but it had very little ſucceſs. *Matilda* was little more than a tranſlation of VOLTAIRE's *Duc de Foix*. The *Contract*, a comedy brought out at the Haymarket, and damned in the preſence of the KING, and the ROYAL FAMILY, the only time perhaps they ever partook of ſuch an amuſement, is ſtolen from *Le triple Marriage* of DESTOUCHES.*

* It is a very curious circumſtance, that the ſame incident that damned the play in England had very nearly procured for it the ſame fate in France,

BICKERSTAFF produced the following dramatic pieces. *Thomas and Sally*, the principal merit of which piece was ARNE's charming muſic. Some of the poetry is neat and lyric, for this author knew the art of writing for muſic; but, whatever there is technical in it is completely falſe. I heard a ſailor ſay, when he heard the expreſſion "tack about and "bear away," "why that's go out of the door, and "go up the chimney."

Love in a Village, 1762, which had a run almoſt equal to the *Beggar's Opera*, is made up, as we have ſeen, of ſeveral things, even to the ſtealing of CHARLES JOHNSON's ſongs, which were before ſtolen; one of theſe, "My Dolly was the faireſt thing," from RAN-

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and yet certainly it is truly comic, and very natural. The father, the ſon, and the daughter, are married unknown to one another, and are therefore embarraſſed at making known the ſecret; but, when they find that they are all in the ſame predicament, a general amneſty is paſſed. Upon this the youngeſt daughter, a little girl of twelve years old, tells her father that ſhe has her ſecret to impart too: "Hey," cries the father, "why zounds you are not "married ſecretly are you?" "No," ſays ſhe, "Papa; but I beg you'll "let me be married as ſoon as poſſible." FOOTE ſaid that, when he lighted the KING to his chair, his Majeſty aſked who the piece was written by: "It is written," replied the wit, "by one of your Majeſty's chaplains; "but it is dull enough to have been written by a biſhop."

DOLPH. The circumſtances are nevertheleſs intereſting and entertaining, and the poetry is well calculated to aſſiſt muſical expreſſion, but nothing can be more puerile than the dialogue. The muſic is a beautiful ſelection, and thoſe ſongs compoſed by ARNE are delightful.

The *Maid of the Mill*, 1765, is much better written than *Love in a Village*, the firſt act is perhaps as perfect as any thing on the ſtage. It however anticipates the denouement, and every thing afterwards declines. The fault of this author was that he was bigotted to Italian muſic, and French dialogue, and therefore the muſic in this opera is fine, and the dialogue dull, *Ralph* and *Fanny* are the beſt characters in the piece, but they are only an improvement on *Hodge* and *Madge*.

Daphne and Amintor, 1765, was ST. FOIX's *L'Oracle* interſperſed with ſongs to bring forward the wonderful ſinging of Mrs. ARNE. GALLUPPPI's muſic was delightful, and CHALONS, the compiler, compoſed a good overture and a pleaſing duett. The *Plain Dealer* was judiciouſly enough altered from WYCHERLEY. It was greatly performed. *Love in the City*, 1767, which piece has been ſince cut down

to the *Romp*, was hiſſed through ſix nights and then withdrawn. SHUTER, who would not allow this author to be more than a good cook, ſaid when he came off the ſtage on the fifth night, it was all up with the piece; brandy would not ſave it.

Lionel and Clariſſa had conſiderable merit; but, in this piece, there were too many cooks; and, when it came to be altered under the title of *A School for Fathers*, it did no better. This author meaſured his ſcenes as an engraver ſquares a picture, and thus, though correct, by being always regular, they were always cold. The prepetually going off with a ſong and teaching the audience, in imitation of the opera, when to expect a bravura ſong, a comic ſong, a cavatina, a duett, a quartetto, and a finale, began to grow intolerable tireſome; beſides ſentiment at this time was only for comedy, and, juſt as that author had complained that the *Clandeſtine Marriage* has anticipated *Love in the City*, though he himſelf had ſtolen the hint, ſo he now complained that *Falſe Delicacy* had anticipated *Lionel and Clariſſa*.

The *Abſent Man*, performed in 1768, was only BRUYERE's ſtory, which was copied into the Spec-

tator, put into dialogue. It was too flimzy to do any thing material. The *Padlock* was performed at Drury Lane, in 1768, as every body knows, with very great ſucceſs. This author's pen never held out to the end. There is a great diſproportion between the firſt act and the ſecond. It was however well managed. The plot is from CERVANTES. Nothing could exceed the ſweetneſs of Mrs. ARNE's ſinging, and BANNISTER as a manly, chaſte, and natural ſinger, gave a ſpecimen of abilities that had perhaps never before been heard.

The *Hyprocrite*, which was altered from CIBBER's *Nonjuror*, with an additional character for WESTON, had ſucceſs. Mrs. ABINGTON's acting was a rich diſplay of faſhion and elegance, as well as feeling and nature. The *Epheſian Matron*, was performed at Ranelagh, where it was conſidered as vulgar to liſten to muſic, and therefore the real effect of this piece was never known. *Dr. Laſt in his Chariot* was a bad ſequel to a good piece. It was taken from MOLIERE's *Malade Imagenaire*. FOOTE wrote a complete ſcene, indeed the beſt in the piece. The *Captive*, which was taken from DRYDEN's *Don Sebaſtian*, had no ſucceſs.

It's well it's no Worſe, a comedy which has ſince been cut down to a farce under the title of *The Pannel*, was nearly damned on the firſt night. It was taken from CALDRONE. The plot was extremely intricate and betrayed a great want of knowledge in this author of tying and untying a dramatic knot. KING, and Mrs. ABINGTON, were incomparable in the Valet and the Maid. The *Recruiting Serjeant* was performed ſucceſsfully at Drury Lane, after being repeated without attention, for two ſeaſons at Ranelagh. *He Would if he Could*, was LA SERVA PADRONA's. It was performed but once.

HIFFERNAN, a character in the ſtyle of SMART, and HOLT, who, on account of his want of prudence and principle, every body ſhunned, wrote an afterpiece called the *Ladies Choice*, which had no ſucceſs. The *Wiſhes of a Free People*, was a handſome compliment, though by the bye it is moſt miſerably written, to the Queen, on her arrival in this country. It is dedicated to her Majeſty in French. It contained a charge on Managers for not bringing out meritorious productions, which charge the want of merit in the piece itſelf completely refuted.

The *New Hippocrites*, which is intended to ridicule the abſurd practice of pinning implicit faith on the judgment of empiricks, was performed only two nights. It was a miſerable buſineſs. The *Earl of Warwick* was a tranſlation from La Harpe, but not ſo good as Franklin's. Theſe and a poor farce, called *The Philoſophic Whim*, make up all the pieces of this curious character.

Arne, to whoſe incomparable muſical talents it will be my pride to pay every tribute of praiſe and admiration, ventured incautiouſly, though in one inſtance not unwiſely, to write for the ſtage. I allude to *Artaxerxes*, there was no tranſlation of this piece except the literal one which was uſed for Engliſh readers at the Opera houſe, where it had been performed with the muſic of Hasse.

With this tranſlation for want of a better, and ſo much knowledge of Italian as might ſerve to aſſiſt him in the adoption of Metastasio's ideas, Arne formed his opera. There is nothing ſublime in his language certainly, but the circumſtances, which are ſtrong, and the conduct, which is artful, were ſo rendered as not to loſe their original force; If the poetry of the ſongs is not beautiful, it is at

leaſt flowing; and, as care has been taken to preſerve the images which give the beſt expreſſion to the muſic, of which this wonderful compoſer was ſurely competent to judge, he would have found it difficult to furniſh himſelf with a tranſlation to better purpoſe. HOOLE's is the beſt tranſlation we have, but it has a moſt forbidding muſical aſpect. Nor is this declaration at all in favour of ADDISON's aſſertion that nonſenſe is beſt ſuited to muſic, for there are many paſſages in this opera that in idea are grand and beautiful, and lend a powerful help to muſical expreſſion. I ſhall only out of many of theſe give only one inſtance.

Behold, on Lethe's diſmal ſtrand,
Thy father's murdered ſpirit ſtand;
In his face what grief profound:
See, he rowls his haggard eyes,
And hark! revenge, revenge, he cries,
And points to his ſtill bleeding wound.

When it is recollected how theſe lines are ſet, and how BEARD ſung them, I think the appropriate epithet inſtead of deſpicable, which has unſparingly been applied, ought to be exquiſite.

In relation to the next piece of ARNE, he cer-

tainly cannot be ſo well defended. Here he had no METASTASIO to lend him aſſiſtance, yet the poſition of ADDISON is ſo fairly inverted; that, by having indifferent words to ſet, he never compoſed ſuch indifferent muſic. It was damned on the ſixth night, which would have been its fate on the third, but for SHUTER; who, when the galleries were very riotous, ſeized a moment of ſuſpenſion and uttered very comically in the language of Juſtice Clack, "Nay, if we all ſpeak together how ſhall "we hear one another."

KENRICK, who will longer be remembered to his infamy for his unmanly and ſcandalous attack on GARRICK,* than to his credit for any work of genius, wrote *Fun*, which was a ſatirical thing intended to ridicule FIELDING, HILL, and other well known characters; but, FIELDING determined to ſpoil this ſame fun of KENRICK, apprehended the actors and the audience on the firſt, and of courſe

* This unprovoked and impudent libel cannot be forgotten. The buſineſs finiſhed by a moſt ſervile and puſillanimous conceſſion in the newſpapers. He aſked a gentleman with his uſual effrontery, what he thought of his conduct, "Why, ſaid the gentleman, the public have for theſe ſix "months conſidered you as a raſcal, and now leſt they ſhould be miſtaken, "you have given it under your hand."

the only, night's performance, which was at the Caſtle Tavern in Paternoſter Row.

Falſtaff's Wedding. This was a ſequel to the ſecond part of *Henry the Fourth*, and written profeſſedly in imitation of SHAKESPEARE. It was an arrogant performance, and muſt ſink to nothing while the Engliſh language endures, for ſo long will SHAKESPEARE'S *Falſtaff* be remembered. This play was afterwards altered and performed at LOVE'S benefit to as little purpoſe as before. The *Widowed Wife*, in which GARRICK aſſiſted the author, who unkindly in return ſaid he had ſpoiled his play, was performed to bad houſes for nine nights. The *Duelliſt*, taken from FIELDING'S *Amelia*, was damned on the firſt night. This author alſo brought out one plot of JOHNSON'S *Country Laſſes*, as an opera which, with the help of ſome Vauxhall muſic, was performed for a time, and the other plot as a farce which was damned on the ſecond night. As to the reſt, KENRICK would write, but it was with difficulty he could procure himſelf to be read; for, what, between his perpetually filling his head with rancour, and his ſtomach with brandy, he burnt with envy at the ſucceſs of every rational man's purſuit, and, by hating every body, was hated by every body.

GENTLEMAN, an author of very poor abilities, wrote and altered the following pieces, *Sejanus*, The *Stratford Jubilee*, the *Sultan*, the *Tobacconiſt*, the *Coxcombs*, *Cupid's Revenge*, the *Pantheonites*, the *Modiſh Wife*, *Zaphira*, *Richard the Second*, the *Mentaliſt*, and the *Fairy Court*, none of which are now known to the ſtage, and it is of very little conſequence that they ever were. REED, a rope maker, wrote the *Superanuated Gallant*, a farce never performed, *Madrigal and Trulletta*, a mock tragedy, performed only one night, and alſo the *Regiſter Office*, a piece which was written with a very laudable intention, and from which FOOTE ſtole Mrs. Cole. It was performed for a length of time at Drury Lane, in 1761, and ſeveral ſucceſſive ſeaſons, which conſiderable applauſe. *Dido*, a tragedy, was performed three times, and *Tom Jones*, taken of courſe from FIELDING's novel, was performed with ſome ſucceſs.

LOVE, an actor of merit and much reſpected, whoſe real name was DANCE, and who was brother to the preſent City ſurveyor, and the member for Eaſt Grinſtead, wrote, for the ſtage, *Pamela*, 1742, a piece remarkable for nothing but that GARRICK performed in it before he was an actor profeſſionally. The *Village Wedding*, a piece tolerably written, but very thinly conſtructed, for it contained but

three characters. *Timon of Athens* was by no means an injudicious alteration of SHAKESPEARE's play. It was only performed at Richmond. The *Ladies Frolick*, which is the *Jovial Crew* cut into a farce, was brought out at Drury Lane in 1770 with tolerable ſucceſs. The *City Madam* altered from *Maſſinger*, was brought forward in 1771, at Richmond. The alterations were judicious, and indeed LOVE had good ſenſe and talents enough to render every thing he undertook reſpectable.

CHAP. VI.

COLMAN, KELLY, LLOYD, Mrs. SHERIDAN, Mrs. GRIFFITHS, AND GOLDSMITH.

I SHALL next ſpeak of COLMAN, as an author of great value to the theatre; for, though it is clearly apparent that his dramatic pieces were not ſo well conſtructed nor operated upon at any time of his life as when he benefited by the advice and aſſiſtance of GARRICK; yet there is a peculiar neatneſs, a beauty, a correctneſs, without, however, tameneſs or vapidity, that has ſcarcely ever been equalled. He was a kind of Engliſh TERENCE, and engrafted claſſical eloquence upon truth and nature; indeed MENANDER's ſalt which is ſuppoſed to have evaporated in its paſſage from Greece to Rome.

The firſt Dramatic eſſay of this author was *Polly Honeycomb*, written purpoſely to bring forward

Miſs POPE. The end of warning young girls from that deſtruction of which they are in danger, from ſwallowing the mental poiſon which, to the ſcandal of the preſs, is diſſeminated through the circulating libraries, is well accompliſhed, and there is ſomething extremely dramatic and perfectly novel in the man's being gradually deſerted by his whole family, at the finiſh. This piece was firſt performed in 1760.

The *Jealous Wife* was produced in 1761. This is one of the beſt comedies on the Stage; thanks, however, in great meaſure to GARRICK; for never was there an occaſion where his aſſiſtance was more wanted, or rendered more honeſtly or more effectually. COLMAN was a young author, which will eaſily be credited, when the reader knows that the *Muſical Lady* made originally a part of the *Jealous Wife*. He had the good ſenſe to liſten to GARRICK, who took great pains with the taſk aſſigned him, and in the performing it evinced great judgment and knowledge of effect. It is generally ſuppoſed, that this play was written by COLMAN and GARRICK in conjunction, in the ſame manner that they wrote the *Clandeſtine Marriage*, but this is not the fact, GARRICK ſuggeſted the alterations, but COLMAN wrote the whole.

Let the public regret the acting of that day, when they are told that Oakly was performed by GARRICK, Major Oakley by YATES, Lord Trinket by O'BRIEN, Sir Harry Beagle by KING, Lady Freelove by Mrs. CLIVE, and Mrs. Oakley by Mrs. PRITCHARD, and that the other characters were proportionably supported.

The *Musical Lady*, 1762, has as good a tendency as *Polly Honeycomb*. Ladies make themselves rediculous in no way so much as in pretending to understand the science of music, of which it is the study and the interest of their instructors to keep them in the dark, frequently for fear of an investigation of their own ignorance. The plot lies very round, and is most judiciously worked up. KING, YATES, and Miss POPE, very ably supported the piece.

Philaster was altered from BEAUMONT and FLETCHER by COLMAN, for the purpose of introducing POWEL on his first appearance. This alteration was made with great good sense, and with an eye strictly to the reputation of the original authors. The assistance given to it by POWEL and Mrs. YATES, was of infinite benefit to the piece. *The Deuce is in Him* was brought out while GAR-

RICK was in Italy, and had good ſucceſs. It was one of thoſe things in the ſtyle of the French after pieces, and was full of that peculiar neatneſs with which this author always wrote. The plot is partly from *Marmontel*, and partly from a circumcumſtance publicly known at that time.

The *Clandeſtine Marriage* has been already ſpoken of. The *Engliſh Merchant*, which is a cloſe tranſlation of VOLTAIRE's *l'Ecoſſaiſe*, was performed at Drury-Lane in 1767. This play is full of ſound good ſenſe; but it is too French, and too cold for any great admiration on the Engliſh ſtage: in fact it is gold, and ſterling, but is unfaſhioned. *Lear* was altered from SHAKESPEAR, and with ſome propriety; but we have already ſeen why TATE's alteration will ever have the preference. COLMAN being at this time in the infancy of his Covent-Garden management, he was obliged to buckle to this kind of work, which was not his fort ſo much as original writing. It was for COLMAN to invent, and for GARRICK to improve; and this is clearly evident here, COLMAN having loſt himſelf very materially as to ſtage effect from the moment he parted from GARRICK.

The *Oxonian in Town*, in which piece it was

clearly evident that COLMAN was left alone, appeared at Covent-Garden. It very properly attacked a favourite vice; but the *'Squire of Alſatia*, and other ſimilar things, had anticipated all the effect that could be expected from it. It would have quietly ſunk to oblivion if ſome gamblers had not ſtupidly volunteered themſeves as the guardians of Iriſh honour, which finiſhed by their tacit confeſſion that they were the very outcaſts of ſociety that the author meant to detect and puniſh.

Man and Wife was a very injudicious performance. COLMAN ought to have known that nothing could ſtand againſt the Spectacle that GARRICK was preparing at Drury-Lane. It muſt, therefore, naturally loſe him reputation. It had, however, the good effect of furniſhing GARRICK with the idea in his prologue of comparing the two houſes to the two Magpies between Hounſlow and Colnbrook. The *Portrait*, taken from *Le Tableau Parlant* of ANSEAUME, was a burletta; the muſic by Dr. ARNOLD. It had very little ſucceſs. The *Fairy Prince* was a ſpectacle gathered from SHAKESPEAR, DRYDEN, and GILBERT WEST, and brought out to introduce the ceremony of the Inſtallation of the Knights of the Garter. In this piece Miſs BROWN, afterwards the unfortunate Mrs. CARGYL, made her firſt appearance,

Comus, performed in 1772, was of courſe altered from MILTON. COLMAN would have more obliged the public, and aſſiſted his own reputation, by undertaking ſome original piece. *Achilles in Petticoats* was an alteration from GAY. It met with very little ſucceſs. The *Man of Buſineſs* is another ſtrong proof that COLMAN felt himſelf awkward when left alone. It had but very moderate ſucceſs, notwithſtanding he produced it at his own theatre with all the advantages that a manager has in his power to give his own productions. *Epicene*, altered of courſe from JONSON, is judicious enough, but it had not great ſucceſs.

Iſlington Spa was brought out at Drury-Lane, after COLMAN had ſold his ſhare of the other theatre. It was well written, but it wanted the touch of GARRICK's promethean pencil, which he was not much inclined perhaps to lend after COLMAN's apoſtacy; for though it is true that COLMAN made money by his Covent-Garden expedition, he certainly would have made more reputation had he ſtaid at Drury-Lane. *New Brooms*, an interlude, at the opening of Drury-Lane theatre, after GARRICK's receſſion, was of courſe well received.

The *Spaniſh Barber*, performed in the Haymarket in the ſummer of 1777, at which time COLMAN became manager of that theatre, was performed with merited ſucceſs. It was during that ſeaſon Miſs FARREN, now Counteſs of DERBY, made her firſt appearance on the ſtage. The muſic of this piece was compoſed by Dr. ARNOLD. The *Female Chevalier* had no great ſucceſs; it was altered from the *Artful Husband* of TAVERNER. *Bonduca*, altered from BEAUMONT and FLETCHER, did no great matters. The Company at the Haymarket were not competent to the repreſentation of ſuch a piece.

With the *Suicide* I ſhall finiſh an examination of this author's dramatic works. It was performed at the Haymarket in 1778, and was certainly COLMAN's beſt piece, after the *Clandeſtine Marriage*, which evidently confirms how much the genius of COLMAN was indebted to the judgement of GARRICK. COLMAN, however, is an author very worthy to be imitated. Chaſte, neat, unexaggerated nature, he hit moſt wonderfully. He was a kind of TENIERS in writing. His figures were ſmall, but they were beautifully finiſhed. They had always the beſt effect however when they were grouped by GARRICK, who knew their keeping better than the painter did; and yet, though GARRICK knew light

and ſhade, ſtyle and effect, better than COLMAN, without ſuch admirable materals as COLMAN poſſeſſed, the public would not have had ſo much opportunity of benefiting by the judgement of GARRICK.

KELLY, who ought to follow COLMAN at an humble diſtance, wrote nevertheleſs for the ſtage with ſome ſucceſs. He happened, fortunately for himſelf, and unluckily for the public taſte, to take advantage of the rage that then prevailed for ſentiment. Every thing was at that time ſentiment. It was the only ſecret of writing for ſucceſs. If a man was to be hanged, or married, out came a ſentiment. If a rogue triumphed, or was toſſed in a blanket, what an opportunity for a ſentiment! If the butler was drunk, or the chambermaid impertinent, liſten to a ſentiment! In ſhort, if the alderman ate too much cuſtard, or his wife frequented too many routs; if the vice was gaming in the Alley, or at Brooks's, wenching, or drinking; if fortune came unaſked, or was deaf to ſolicitation; if the ſubject was health or ſickneſs, happineſs or miſery; hooraw for a ſentiment!

Falſe Delicacy, 1768, had almoſt all theſe requiſites; and, that the audience might have enough of

their darling ſentiments after they had been delighted with a plentiful number of them in the courſe of the action, the moment the cataſtrophe finiſhed, forward came every individual actor and actreſs, and ſuſpended the fall of the curtain with a ſentiment. Nay, ſo far did this folly prevail, that the critics themſelves began to congratulate the world on the reſtoration of MENANDER, claſſically conveyed in the manner of the Greek chorus.

A Word to the Wiſe, 1770, was damned on the ſtage, but the author was remunerated by a large ſubſcription. This failure has been imputed to KELLY'S having broached his political opinions pretty freely in the newſpapers; but without any outrage of probality or common ſenſe, it would be more natural to impute its failure to the want of merit in the piece, which was miſerably bad; beſides GOLDSMITH had, before this, balanced the account between nature and ſentiment, in which poor ſentiment was left minus by a conſiderable difference.

Clementina, a tragedy, by this author, performed at Covent-Garden in 1771, was almoſt as dull as his ſentimental comedy. It ſet the audience aſleep, and therefore they had not ſpirits enough to damn

it,* which they nevertheleſs might have been tempted to have done if it had not been for Mrs. YATES's admirable acting. The *Prince of Agra*, altered from DRYDEN, and alſo brought out at Covent-Garden, was performed for the benefit of Mrs. LESSINGHAM, but had very little ſucceſs. This play, and the *School for Wives*, were fathered, out of kindneſs to KELLY, by a reſpectable gentleman now at the head of the police, which ſhews that the public manifeſt their ſentiments, as to plays, without regard to the circumſtances or ſituations of the authors, but merely according to their merits; for this play had no ſucceſs, and the *School for Wives* not enough to flatter the pretentions of a reputable author.

The *Romance of an Hour* was taken from MARMONTEL, and was paſſable enough; the *Man of Reaſon* is acknowledged, by KELLY's biographer, to have been inferior to the reſt of his works, for which there was no occaſion; but yet the failure of it is very kindly attributed to WOODWARD's miſconception of the principal character. In ſhort,

* A gentleman was aſked, after one of the repreſentations of this play, why he did not hiſs it? "How the devil could I," ſaid he, "It was "impoſſible! A man cannot hiſs and yawn at the ſame time."

KELLY was but an indifferent writer; but, by having many companionable qualities, and being ready at all times to render his conduct pleasurable and serviceable to society, both the public and his friends, wherever they properly could, were happy in return to oblige and serve him.

LLOYD, the friend and companion of CHURCHILL and WILKES, was a good writer. His *Actor* is a poem of considerable merit; and proved a bone that wits of high reputation have been happy to nibble at. His dramatic productions however are of no high rank. The *Tears and Triumphs of Parnassus* was merely an ode. *Arcadia*, or the *Shepherd's Wedding*, was a compliment on the nuptials of their Majesties. It was neatly written. The *School for Wives*, from MOLIERE, was printed, but never acted. Indeed it was merely written to shew how far MURPHY had borrowed from the French.

The *Death of Adam* was translated from the German of KLOPSTOCK. It is complained of as a bad translation; and certainly it is not a good play. The *Capricious Lovers*, to say the truth, is the only piece of LLOYD which can be called in the smallest

degree an acquiſition to the ſtage. It was performed at Drury-Lane while GARRICK was in Italy. The muſic was compoſed by RUSH, and it was well acted. The ſubject was FAVART's *Ninette à la Cour*.

Mrs. SHERIDAN, who had pretenſions as a writer greatly beyond thoſe which are poſſeſſed by ladies in general, wrote *Sydney Biddulph* for the cloſet, and for the ſtage, the *Diſcovery*, in which there is great nature and ſpirit; and the *Dupe*, in which indelicacy, a quickſand ſo often fatal to lady writers, ſunk her venture. It has been urged that the audience were too delicate, but this was not the truth, for the *Dupe* was performed in 1763, and the rage for falſe delicacy did not prevail till 1768.

Mrs. GRIFFITHS was a writer widely different from Mrs. SHERIDAN, for ſhe was a type of the celebrated Mrs. PHILIPS, the never to be enough admired Orinda, even to her Platonic Letters. Her dramatic pieces were the *Platonic Wife*, performed in 1765, and taken from MARMONTEL. It lingered through ſix nights. *Amana* was a kind of dramatic poem, but it was never acted. The *Double Miſtake*

had about the ſame reception as the *Platonic Wife*. The *School for Rakes*, 1769, was a tranſlation from BEAUMARCHAIS, and proved to be the beſt of this lady's productions. It was well performed, and had a tolerable run. *A Wife in the Right* exhibited a lady writer in the wrong, for it was performed only one night. It came out at Covent-Garden in 1772. *The Times* gave Mrs. GRIFFITHS a hint that it was time ſhe ſhould leave off writing for the ſtage. This hint ſhe took, and this piece finiſhed her dramatic career.

GOLDSMITH, who has done honour to Engliſh literature; who was the beſt meaning, ſtrange, good, whimſical creature in the world; whoſe intentions, though always right, by doing nothing like any body elſe he executed always wrong; whoſe writings, which are a mixture of merit and ſingularity, ſcarcely had a part that did not contain ſome trait of himſelf; who has left two beautiful poems, a ſweet ballad, and a charming novel, wrote ſucceſsfully for the ſtage, but not up to the ſtandard of his other productions.

The good natured Man was brought out at Covent-Garden, exactly at the moment when the public

began to be under the influence of the ſentimental mania. There is nothing, however, better than Croker, and the incident of the incendiary letter; but Bailiffs were introduced on the ſtage, which had been done an hundred times before, and has been an hundred times ſince, and it was enough that the audience did not like ſuch vulgar acquaintance. There have been times when, if they had been real bailiffs, the managers would have ſympathized with the audience. To ſee however that the public are a very ſhort time deluded when they adopt falſe taſte without conſideration, they were glad of the next opportunity GOLDSMITH gave them of laughing away the gloom that had been thrown over their minds by the introduction of an infatuation ſo totally contrary to the Engliſh character.

She ſtoops to Conquer GOLDSMITH conſidered as a deſperate remedy for a deſperate diſeaſe. It operated effectually; indeed like electricity. The audiences ſeemed as if they had been at ſome place the reverſe of the Cave of Trophonius, for they went in ſad and came out merry. This piece was a good deal abuſed, and no wonder, for it went to the ruin of dull authors. Its efficacy, however, was con-

firmed; and, whatever abſurdities the public taſte may have aſſumed at times, it has not ſince then trenched upon the pulpit. GOLDSMITH alſo altered for QUICK's benefit, the *Grumbler*, from SEDLEY.

CHAP. VII.

CUMBERLAND, BENTLEY, MASON, Mrs. BROOKE, Mrs. LENNOX, HULL, O'HARA, HOOLE, and VICTOR.

CUMBERLAND, a well known voluminous writer; who, beſides a prodigious number of different productions, has laboured in the Theatrical vineyard with great earneſtneſs and ſome reputation, even from 1761, to the preſent moment, brought out, during the period to which my ſtrictures extend, thirteen dramatic pieces.

The *Baniſhment of Cicero*, 1761, was offered to GARRICK, but not accepted. The buſineſs of Clodius and his ſiſter, and the debauching of Pompey's wife in the temple of Juno, were not to be tolerated. It was in fact, though ſtrongly written in many parts, evidently an inexperienced

production, and therefore, the manager, in refuſing it, did his duty by the public. The *Summer's Tale* was an opera, performed at Covent Garden Theatre in 1765. It was too heavy for a comic opera, and therefore was called a comedy with ſongs. The muſic was an Italian ſelection, but it was in general dull and ill choſen. This piece was cut down to a farce, but it did as little in that form as at firſt.

The *Brothers* was performed at Covent Garden, 1769, and received conſiderable applauſe. The *Weſt Indian*, by infinite degrees the beſt production of this author, was performed at Drury Lane in 1771. Mr. CUMBERLAND had by this time ſeen, that recourſe muſt be had to other authors if any expectations of ſucceſs were formed by him with ſafety. He had tried this expedient with effect in the *Brothers*, which were *Tom Jones* and *Blifil*, and here he was determined not to inconvenience himſelf; but I do not mean this a as reproach, ſince CAMPLEY's generoſity, and other circumſtancs in the *Funeral*, the *Twin Rivals*, and other plays, ſo whetted his theatrical knife, that it carved a moſt entertaining play, which, in ſpight of a great deal of affected language, created intereſt and afforded pleaſure.

Timon of Athens was an alteration from SHAKESPEAR, and performed at Drury Lane, in 1771, with but little ſucceſs. The *Faſhionable Lover* came out the ſame ſeaſon, but it was a moſt injudicious play and contained ſuch a mixture of the *Conſcious Lovers*, *Falſe Delicacy*, *Taſte*, and *Clariſſa Harlowe*, that it was impoſſible for any thing to be more heterogeneous; and, to add to the other misfortunes of this comedy, MOODY was brought forward to perform a Scotchſman. The *Note of Hand*, a farce, had ſome ſucceſs, but was not equal to the after-pieces of MURPHY or COLMAN. The *Choleric Man* was very much attacked by the critics, which brought out an iraſcibility from the author which has been ever ſince played upon. Let no man write unleſs he can know how to treat calumny with contempt.

The *Battle of Haſtings*, performed at Drury Lane in 1778, turned out the battle of the critics, who had certainly too much reaſon on their ſide. They alledged that the truth of hiſtory had been violated, and that a perpetual imitation of SHAKESPEAR exhibited the writing of this author, as indeed it would of any other, to a diſadvantage; not however that it is not tolerated and praiſed too by

authors of the preſent day. The fact is, the public had been taught to expect too much from this play, which was certainly a ſtrange incongruous buſineſs. Any man might have ſworn that the *Weſt Indian* would have been the be all, and the end all with this gentleman. When a man finiſhes a work with ſaying "this is well but I ſhall make the next better," it is a thouſand to one but he ſucceeds; if he pronounces that nothing in its way can go beyond it, he ſpeaks truth as to himſelf, for he will not exceed it again.

BENTLEY, ſon of the celebrated Dr. BENTLEY, wrote a piece, in the nature of the old Italian comedy, called the *Wiſhes*, which, as we have ſeen, was performed at Drury Lane, during that Summer that MURPHY and FOOTE had the management of it. It was odd, extravagant and eccentric, but there was ſomething ſo novel in making the whole pantomimic family ſpeak, when we had been accuſtomed to be entertained only with their attitudes and jeſticulation, that the public knew not how to take it. This helped its fate which was however accelerated by its want of plan, connection, and intereſt. BENTLEY alſo wrote *Philodamus*, a kind of tragedy, on which GRAY has written a moſt

elaborate eulogium; but the beſt that can be ſaid of it is, that it may be paſſable in the cloſet, but it would be intolerable on the ſtage.

Mason, a ſweet and beautiful writer, and a man univerſally beloved and eſteemed, wrote *Elfrida*, and *Caractacus*, neither of which pieces were intended for the ſtage, they were brought out, aſſiſted by the muſic of Arne, and though it is both natural and proper to prefer regular tragedy, as time and cuſtom has eſtabliſhed it, yet it was a compliment to the ſtage and a proof of Colman's claſſical diſcrimination to bring forward *Elfrida*, though not ſo well altered by him as it was afterwards by the author. In this kind of tragedy, *Caractacus* is the beſt becauſe the cataſtrophe is more noble, more elevated, and the diſtreſs is heightened by a conſideration that valour ſuffers for Patriotiſm, and that hiſtory is not violated.

In *Elfrida* the puniſhment is hard, but it is the puniſhment of treaſon, and truth is outraged, by making Elfrida retire to a convent, rather fondly by the way than religiouſly, while recollection buſily reminds us, that the real Elfrida married the King who murdered her huſband. Again, a chorus of Druids, who were profeſſionally bards, is ſuperior

both naturally and mufically to a chorus of virgins; but on the other hand, domeſtic woe always makes the deepeſt impreſſion, and the lyric part of *Elfrida* is better written for muſic than that of *Charactacus*.*

Mrs. BROOKE, who has written many novels that have been well received by the world, if that be a criterion of merit, wrote alſo a tragedy, the only production I am entitled to mention here, called *Virginia*. Mrs. LENNOX ſtands upon much the ſame foundation as to reputation as Mrs. BROOKE. Her Dramatic pieces are *Philander*, never performed; the *Siſter*, performed one night only, in 1769, at Covent-Garden, and *Old City Manners*, altered from *Eaſtward Hoe*, and performed with very little applauſe at Drury-Lane.

HULL, whoſe various merits as author, actor, and manager, have long been known to the public, produced the following dramatic pieces. The

* I am competent to give an anſwer to all thoſe who have expreſſed great aſtoniſhment that MASON never wrote a regular tragedy, by aſſuring the reader, that he himſelf told me, at Aſton in Yorkſhire, that he had then in his bureau two tragedies, written agreeable to the uſage of the Engliſh theatre, but that they never ſhould be produced, owing to the trouble and pain he had experienced from the folly and caprice of managers.

Twins altered from the *Comedy of Errors*, and performed with ſucceſs; the *Abſent Man*, performed once; *Pharnaces*, an opera, ſet by BATES, and performed at Drury-Lane, while GARRICK was in Italy. The *Spaniſh Lady* performed for the author's benefit in 1765; *All in the Right* from DESTOUCHES, alſo performed for the author's benefit; the *Perplexities*, a comedy, that deſerved its title, for there never was ſo perplexed a plot, which was taken from TUKE's *Adventures of Five Hours*, and in which BEARD ſung, ſpoke, and with his uſual philanthropy did every thing elſe in his power to ſerve his friend; and the *Fairy Favour*, a trifle performed in 1767, for the entertainment of his Royal Highneſs the Prince of Wales.

HULL alſo wrote or rather faſhioned into an opera, the *Royal Merchant* from BEAUMONT and FLETCHER. The muſic was by LINLEY. It had but little ſucceſs. Some of the ſongs were taken into the *Camp*, a piece performed at Drury-Lane in 1778, and ſuppoſed to have been written by the Manager of that Theatre, at which time the public received them as we have ſeen with rapture, when they had paſſed them by with indifference at Covent-Garden, ſo much faſcination is there ſome times in a great name. *Roſamond* was a wonderful favorite for ſome

time, wonderful, I ſay, becauſe perhaps nothing could have been more inſufferably dull, but the ſtory did the buſineſs. Queen ELENOR's poiſoned bowl and dagger penetrated to the very back of the upper gallery. *Edward and Eleonora* was altered from THOMPSON but it did nothing; *Love will find out the Way*, an opera, and the *Victim* a tragedy, finiſh Mr. HULL's works neither of which experienced much ſucceſs.

O'HARA, through whoſe pieces we have been taught to admire the native Iriſh melodies, produced *Midas*, the *Golden Pippin*, and *April Day*, original burlettas; and tranſlated the *Two Miſers*, from FENOILLOT, and altered *Tom Thumb* from FIELDING. *Midas*, in which there was certainly much excellent humour, and fair burleſque, was by infinite degrees the beſt of theſe pieces.

HOOLE, who tranſlated METASTASIO, altered three of that admirable author's operas into tragedies, which producing a new effect by ending happily, received conſiderable applauſe. It was only an innovation, however, for they completely exhibited an anticlimax, and lowered in proportion as the novelty wore off. Theſe tragedies are *Cyrus*, *Timanthes*, and *Cleonice*. It is worthy of remark that this new

era of tragedy began with ſentimental comedy, *Cyrus* being the companion of *Falſe Delicacy*, and brought out in 1768.

VICTOR, more celebrated as a theatrical treaſurer than a theatrical writer, produced, however, ſeveral things of different deſcriptions. He altered, moſt miſerably, SHAKESPEAR'S *Two Gentlemen of Verona*; *Altemira*, a tragedy, was publiſhed but never performed. The *Fatal Error*, a ſoft name for the commiſſion of adultery, altered from HEYWOOD'S *Woman Killed with Kindneſs*, was alſo never performed. The *Fortunate Peaſant*, taken from MARIVAUX'S *Payſan Parvenu*, ſhared the ſame fate and ſo did the *Sacrifices*.

CHAP. VIII.

SHERIDAN, JEPHSON, BATE, MISS MORE, BURGOYNE, KING, ANDREWS, MRS. COWLEY, AND HOLCROFT.

As I profeſs to cloſe this work at the death of Garrick, to which period we are now haſtening, and, as the authors of whom I have lately ſpoken produced theatrical exhibitions after that event, as well as thoſe whoſe names are placed at the head of this chapter, I ſhall merely have opportunity to ſpeak of the nature and tendency of their different merits, and review ſuch pieces as they produced up to 1779.

Sheridan, a man of moſt commanding talents, would have ſtood inferior to very few writers, on this or any other ſimilar liſt, had his time been entirely devoted to the theatre; for, in that caſe, as genius loves to ſpread and expand, and ſeldom ſa-

tisfies itſelf with adopting when it can have opportunity of traverſing the wide range of invention, the public would no doubt have ſeen original tragedies and comedies, ſuch as might have ſerved as models for the imitation of authors not ſo happily gifted, inſtead of ſcenes, hints, and circumſtances, moſt ingeniouſly wrought together indeed, but as far as any thing on the ſtage from originality.

This is a fact ſo univerſally known, and ſo conſtantly admitted, that it has been often argued upon. It has been ſaid that there is not in nature a new character, nor a new ſentiment, and all that can be done is to take old matter and give it a novel appearance. That it is ſafer to do ſo I will not deny; for certainly, when any thing comes in contact with the imagination that has been familiar to it, without conſideration, we give credit for its merit upon the ſpot, whatever we may do upon reflection; and, having once praiſed a thing, a falſe pride prevents us from diſcovering that we were deceived. It muſt not be believed that CONGREVE's *bon mots* were all impromptus; and it is a literal fact that ſome of JOE MILLER's beſt jeſts are ſtolen from the ancients; but when this is allowed, it will yet be granted, that Mr. SHERIDAN could have in-

vented incidents as good as thoſe he has borrowed.

This is confirmed by this author's firſt production, the *Rivals*; which, though Lydia Languiſh, Falkland and his Miſtreſs, and ſome other characters, are copies inſtead of portraits, is the moſt original of his plays, and by many of the judicious thought the beſt. It was nearly damned on the firſt night; and he is ſaid to have remarked to a friend, as he withdrew it, "I have now got the "laſt, and it ſhall be my fault next time if I don't "make the ſhoe to fit." His labour, however, being only cobler's work, it required too much method for his volatile genius to buckle to. For the reſt, the adopted paſſages are not judicious; for Polly Honeycomb was better in its former place. The Nut-brown Maid is only fit for the poem ſhe adorns; for though her language on the ſtage is full of ſweetneſs and delicacy, it is no more appropriate than would be the fine ſtrokes of a miniature painter in the finiſhing of flats and wings. Being, therefore, neither wholly original, nor wholly imitation, this piece ſtands like this author's own ſimile, in the *Duenna*, of the wall between church and ſynagogue, for it is part natural and part incongruous.

We ſhall ſee that Mr. SHERIDAN completely got rid of the original part of the ſyſtem in his next piece. In the *Duenna* there is not a ſingle new ſituation from beginning to end. The whole of the plot of turning the Daughter out of doors is conjointly the *Sicilienne* of MOLIERE and *Il Filoſofo di Campagna*, where every circumſtance is to be found from the ſerenade in the firſt ſcene to the marriage in the laſt.

In *Il Filoſofo di Campagna* a father inſiſts on his daughter's marrying to pleaſe him, and refuſes her the man of her heart, which trouble ſhe gets rid of by palming her maid on the object of her averſion, to which maid in the end he is actually married; and it is impoſſible but the equivoques in one piece muſt be extremely ſimilar to thoſe in the other. It muſt be allowed there is more humour, or, if you will, farce in the *Duenna*, than in the other piece, but not ſo much nature; for the countryman might be ſuppoſed without difficulty to miſtake a ſmart country laſs for his friend's daughter, whereas it is a very ſtrong violence on probability to make Iſaac miſtake the Duenna for Louiſa; one he is told is twenty years old, and the other he muſt know to be ſixty.

The buſineſs of Ferdinand and Clara is the *Wonder*. Clara elopes, Louiſa keeps the ſecret; Iſabella elopes, Violante keeps the ſecret; Louiſa is the ſiſter of Ferdinand, ſo is Iſabella of Don Felix; Liſſardo is threatened ſword in hand by Don Felix, ſo is Iſaac by Ferdinand; Don Felix quarrels with his ſiſter's lover, ſo does Ferdinand; Don Felix miſtakes Iſabella veiled for Violante, ſo does Ferdinand miſtake Louiſa for Clara; nay, ſo cloſely is the wonder copied, that Liſſardo's anxiety to get Gibby a drubbing is apparent in Iſaac's telling Ferdinand that he may cut Antonio's throat and welcome.

Father Paul is MARMONTEL's *Philoſophe ſoi diſant*, who, as he ſits at a feaſt and enveighs againſt gormandizing, actually ſays, as he entreats a lady to help him to ſome nicety at table, "Can't we be "ſatisfied with the wholeſome roots of the earth?" and laments, after drinking a glaſs of Burgundy, that people will not be content, like our forefathers, "with the chryſtal ſtream." But the circumſtance that proves this author as fallible as any other is, that he has made the *Critic* laugh at the *Duenna*; for the clock ſtrikes four at the beginning of the *Tragedy rehearſed*, which, according to the

dedication, profeſſes to be critical, with a view of courſe to ridicule the unity of time; and it ſtrikes three at the beginning of the *Duenna*, intending, without doubt, to mark that unity as a beauty.

The poetry, though ſeldom original, is every where neat and flowing, and well ſuits the beautiful muſic, partly ſelected, and partly from LINLEY, which proved of infinite advantage to the piece. It was, however, very fortunate both for the author and the muſician that the rage for catches and glees prevailed a good deal at that time, otherwiſe the public might have thought it a little out of place to make the characters expreſs their happineſs by ſinging anthems. It has the effect of reviving falſe delicacy by ſetting ſentiment to muſic. It is impoſſible to omit in this place that the beautiful glee of "How merrily we live," was rehearſed, and thrown aſide under an idea that it would have no effect.

As to the dialogue of this piece it is lively, pointed, and pertinent. It has not the eaſe of VANBURGH, the neatneſs of FARQUHAR, nor the wit of CONGREVE, and yet it has ſomething of them all. It is managed with the cunning of a painter who does not imitate any particular artiſt, but who

copies the ſchool. The aſide ſpeeches of Iſaac, ſhewing before hand, and without his knowledge how eaſily he is himſelf to be taken in by his different attempts to cheat others, convey the moſt artful ſpecies of anticipation that ever was practiſed, and ſhew a judgment of theatrical effect, powerful, new and extraordinary.

The *School for Scandal* is no more original than the *Duenna*. The ſchool itſelf is CONGREVE'S *Cabal*, and the play may fairly be called A Sequel to the *Way of the World*. The ſcandal has been all detailed in different pieces, but principally in the *Plain Dealer*, where in Novel, Lord Plauſible, Olivia, and Eliza will be found, Sir Benjamin, Crab, Lady Sneerwell and Mrs. Candour. The brothers have been in a variety of productions from the Adelphi to fifty other things; but the *Squire of Alſatia*, on the ſtage, and *Tom Jones*, in the cloſet, contain the cloſeſt reſemblances. The Uncle, lately returned from abroad and introduced to the drunken company, and the ſale of the pictures, are extremely like the intriguing chambermaid, which was taken from *Deſtouches*.* The reſerving the Uncle's picture is in a

* "We have ſold every thing," ſays the drunken Colonel: "What, "all my [pictures?" ſays the father: "Oh, damme, they went firſt," cried the Colonel.

French piece, called *L'Ecole de la Jeuneſſe*; Joſeph, and Lady Teazle, are Conſtant, and Lady Brute, but with an infinitely worſe argument on the ſide of the gallant, and leſs provocation on the ſide of the lady, for it would be a ſpecies of ingratitude dangerous to risk, even in fiction, for Lady Teazle to ſwerve even in the remoteſt degree from her duty, whereas Lady Brute has more provocation to juſtify her wavering fidelity than any wife on the ſtage. Thus upon the principle that men had better be born fortunate than rich, ſo it is profitable to theatrical writers to uſe penetration, rather than genius.

The dialogue of the *School for Scandal* is in general admirable, but it is expreſsly warped in places for the purpoſe of procuring that applauſe as ADDISON calls it which proceeds from the head rather than the heart. HERON, the critic, points out ſeveral of theſe tinſel ornaments, which he tells you are known by the name of Clap traps, and, in particular inſtances, the ſpeech of Charles to Rowley, who tells him to obſerve the old proverb, and to be juſt before he is generous, "Why, ſo I "would," ſays Charles, "if I could; but juſtice "is an old lame hobbling beldame, and I can't "get her to keep pace with generoſity for the ſoul

" of me." This ſentiment, which half the audiences to this play have received with the loudeſt applauſe, is, he tells us, and he tells us truly, falſe and immoral, and that no reprobation can be too ſevere for it; and nothing can be more ſterling reaſon, for the money that a man holds who has not paid his debts is not his, and therefore it is not in his power to beſtow it; but theſe are errors eaſily in this author's power to rectify, and it is truly to be lamented that either indolence or avocation ſhould check the exertions of talents which are ſo reputable to himſelf, ſo gratifying to the public, and ſo honourable to literature.

Jephson, a gentleman I believe greatly courted and beloved by his private friends, produced *Briganza*, a piece written with conſiderable judgment and good poetic effect. The ſcene of the Monk, though evidently an imitation of King John and Hubert, is uncommonly beautiful and highly wrought. The reſemblance of this play to *Venice Preſerved* in the end injured its ſucceſs, though it was well received and frequently repeated during the firſt ſeaſon, which was in 1775. The *Law of Lombardy*, 1779, was performed but nine nights. It was much inferior to *Briganza*.

BATE DUDLEY, a gentlemen who has written more for his amuſement, than, for the ſake of the public, he ought to have done, produced for the ſtage, *Henry and Emma*, performed for Mrs. HARTLEY's benefit, in 1774. The *Rival Candidates*, an after-piece at Drury Lane, 1775, which had creditable ſucceſs. The *Blackamoor Waſhed White*, 1776, which was damned, as it was generally underſtood, by a party created by the author's political diſputes, and the *Flitch of Bacon*, performed at the Haymarket, in 1778, which was frequently in that ſeaſon, and has been ſince performed repeatedly with conſiderable ſucceſs.

Miſs MORE, who, as a writer and a ſchool miſtreſs, is well known, produced a dramatic paſtoral called, *A Search after Happineſs*, only recited by young ladies in the manner of RACINE's *Athaliah*; The *Inflexible Captive*, a tragedy, performed one night at Bath; *Percy* another tragedy, performed at Covent Garden, which had conſiderable ſucceſs, and *Fatal Falſehood* which was exhibited only three nights.*

* Nothing can be more ridiculous than literary quarrels even among men, but when ladies, fearful leſt their poetic offſprings ſhould crawl through life unheeded, publicly expoſe themſelves to the world, in order to

BURGOYNE, the Saratoga General produced before GARRICK's death, the *Maid of the Oaks*; which, with the aſſiſtance of GARRICK, was made into a very entertaining performance. There was a good deal of CIBBER in this author's dialogue; and had he oftener tried his hand, while he had opportunity of deriving aſſiſtance from ſo able a friend, he certainly would have been a reſpectable playwright.

KING, who has ſometimes amuſed himſelf with writing, and never without ſucceſs, produced a

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aſcertain their beauty and legitimacy, who does not wiſh they had occupied their time with a needle inſtead of a pen. The attention of the world was called, when *Fatal Falſehood* came out, to a newſpaper diſpute between Miſs MORE and Mrs. COWLEY, who brought out a tragedy called *Albina*. Miſs MORE "was penetrated with the deepeſt regret at being "compelled to take a ſtep ſo repugnant to her own feelings, and the "delicacy of her ſex, but her moral character had been groſsly attacked, "and ſhe felt herſelf under the neceſſity of ſolemnly declaring that ſhe "had never ſeen, heard or read a ſingle line of Mrs. COWLEY's tragedy." Mrs. COWLEY in reply ſaid, "that ſhe wiſhed Miſs MORE had been "ſtill more ſenſible of the indelicacy of a newſpaper altercation between "women, and of the ideas of ridicule that the world are apt to attach to "ſuch unſexual hardineſs. She ſays," in her preface, "ſhe has only "related events, and is truly ſorry to find that Miſs MORE can not only "be angry, but, when ſhe is angry, ſhe can be very unpolite." Had theſe fooliſh ladies no friend to prevent their making themſelves a town talk? what were they cavilling about after all? One of theſe plays was withdrawn on the third night, and the other was performed but once and then ſcarcely heard to an end.

muſical piece called *Love at firſt Sight*; and a farce called *Wit's laſt Stake*, both at Drury Lane.

Andrews, a moſt curious and ſingular author, a kind of dramatic cuckoo, with this difference, that after he took poſſeſſion of the neſts of other writers, and ſucked the eggs of their imaginations, inſtead of being able to produce any of his own, ſat upon the ſhells expecting to hatch ideas after the ſubſtance and the vital ſpeck were gone. I thank chance that I have only to ſpeak of three non entities produced by this gunpowder merchant, all which have long ſince flown in fumo. The *Election*, a trifling interlude, which proved him a very unpromiſing candidate for the public favour, the *Conjuror*, at which title was levelled the pun of the day to the diſadvantage of the author, and Belphegor, the acquaintance of which devil he ſeems to have courted in order that he might be familiar with damnation.

Mrs. Cowley, of whoſe temper we have juſt now ſeen a ſpecimen in her ſquabble with Miſs More, wrote the *Run-away*, a comedy, and *Who's the Dupe*, a farce, before the time my taſk expires. The comedy was touched a good deal by Garrick; and, being of a ſprightly kind and having nothing

particular to offend, it had the uſual ſucceſs of that deſcription of pieces. The farce was a much better thing. It was performed with reputable ſucceſs.

Holcroft, a moſt extraordinary author, has written a great deal, has been greatly encouraged, and yet has done nothing for literature; becauſe, perhaps, he has done little for morality, leſs for truth, and nothing for ſocial order. His only dramatic work, that comes under my examination, is a trifling opera, called the *Criſis*, which was performed for a benefit.

CHAP. IX

INFERIOR AUTHORS.

I SHALL now, in a ſummary way, take up thoſe authors that remain, juſt as they come to hand, without reſpect of perſons. Indeed it is impoſſible for me to be very prolix, for they amount to upwards of ninety; and I muſt reſerve as much room as poſſible to bring this hiſtory to that ſort of roundneſs which it will require the relation of many particulars to effect.

CRANE, a weaver at Mancheſter, contrived to manufacture a collection of poems; among which he publiſhed two tragedies, called the *Female Paricide*, and *Saul and Jonathan*. POTTINGER was a ſober bookſeller, till STEVENS's lecture on heads ſet him literally mad for lecturing and writing plays. During his lucid intervals he produced the *Methodiſt*, a comedy; and the *Humourous Quarrel*, a farce.

DELAP, a clergyman, brought out at Drury-Lane a tragedy, which had but little ſucceſs, called *Hecuba*. COOK, an author more mad than POTTINGER, produced the *King cannot Err*, and the *Hermit Converted*.

HARRIS, whoſe Hermes, and ſome other works, are deſervedly celebrated, wrote the *Spring*, a paſtoral, which was performed at Drury-Lane. PERCY, well known by his reliques of ancient Engliſh poetry, produced a piece, of no great merit however, called, *The Little Orphan of China*. WIGNELL, an under actor, who was remarkable for making tragedy comic and comedy tragic, and was in conſequence a wonderful favorite with the bumkins in the country,* was as much *a traverſe* at writing as at acting. His attempts were a farce, called *Love's Artifice*; and a maſque, called the *Triumph of Hymen*. GRAHAM, a ſchoolmaſter, wrote *Telemachus*, and ſome other play, which GARRICK refuſed. BAKER, celebrated for compiling the Playhouſe Dictionary,

* WIGNELL was fiſhing at ſome place in the country when ſome clowns came by, and could not but admire the pompous dexterity with which he played with his prey. "There, there!" ſaid one. "Let un "aloane," ſaid another, "if a do but fiſh as well as he does act, he "wunna leave a fiſh in the mill dam."

wrote a dramatic poem, acted at Edinburgh, called the *Muſe of Oſſian*. Mrs. LUTTER, a ſhopkeeper at Reading, who neglected her buſineſs to write plays, publiſhed a tragedy called the *Siege of Jeruſalem by Titus Veſpaſian*. DOWNING, a true ſtrolling actor, wrote *Newmarket*, a farce; and the *Parthian Exile*, a tragedy.

The celebrated SCHOMBERG, GARRICK'S great favorite as a phyſician, could however find no favour with him as an author, for he repeatedly refuſed to perform his pieces. One was a farce, called the *Death of Bucephalus*; another a burletta, called the *Judgement of Paris*; and the third, and laſt, a tragedy, called *Romulus and Herſelia*. CARR is only known by having a hand in a tragedy called *Eugenia*. POTTER wrote a trifling piece called the *Choice of Apollo*. DENIS, ſon of a French refugee, tranſlated the *Siege of Calais* from BELLOY. ASPINAL publiſhed a tragedy called the *Brothers*, done according to his own words from CORNEILLE. CUNNINGHAM, wrote a paſtoral, called the *Royal Shepherds*. OSBORNE, an artiſt, who rendered himſelf celebrated by painting a fiſh with wings, a calf with ſix legs, the ghaſtly Miller of Billericay, and other provincial monſters, but who however was poſſeſſed of conſiderable merit, attempted, with toler-

able ſucceſs, to unite poetry with painting, by writing a piece called the *Midnight Miſtake*.

Bourgeois is ſuppoſed to be a fictitious name, but it ſtands before two plays, called the *'Squire Burleſqued*, and the *Diſappointed Coxcomb*. Sadler, a Shropſhire man, wrote at Shrewſbury a piece called the *Merry Miller*. Thompson, whoſe nautical character is well known, and who was diſtinguiſhed early in life by the title of Poet of the Stews, wrote, for the ſtage, the *Hobby Horſe*, an indifferent piece; brought out for Bensley's benefit; the *Fair Quaker*, altered from the *Fair Quaker of Deal*, and brought out with great care by Garrick; the *Syrens*, an unſucceſsful maſque; and *St. Helena*, performed at Drury-Lane only one night. This gentleman is ſaid alſo to have written the *Seraglio*, performed at Covent-Garden in 1776; but though this intelligence is reiterated and many circumſtances concerning it, to my knowledge, it is every word falſe, and that the perſon in queſtion had not ſeen a ſingle word of the piece when it was put into the hands of Mr. Harris. I only mention this to ſhew the wonderful conſiſtency of theatrical hiſtorians.

Rogers, an officer in the army, publiſhed a piece the ſubject of which he was perhaps a judge

of, but it muſt have been Cherokee language to us. It was called *Ponteach* and the ſcene lay in America. CAREY, well known as a writer, and a lecturer, produced the *Inoculator*, the *Cottagers*, *Liberty Chaſtiſed*, *Shakeſpeare's Jubilee*, *Three Old Women Weatherwiſe*, the *Magic Gridle*, and the *Nutbrown Maid*. One of theſe pieces was I believe performed at the Haymarket, and another at Marybone Gardens. LANGHORNE, a clergyman, is ſaid moſt pathetically to have lamented the death of his wife, and to have waſhed away his ſorrow by large libations of Burton ale; and, in thoſe moments of melancholy, to have written a tragedy called the *Fatal Prophecy*. Mrs. WILLIAMS, the blind penſioner of Dr. JOHNSON, tranſlated METATASIO's *Uninhabited Iſland*. WISE wrote the *Coronation of David*, and *Nadir*, neither of which were performed. COCKINGS produced the *Conqueſt of Grenada*.

Dr. BURNEY, an ingenious and elegant writer, whoſe Hiſtory of Muſic is full of general enquiry, and ſound knowledge, tranſlated ROUSSEAU's dry and correct piece *Le Devin de Village*; and, that it might be as cold and dull as it was in the French, the original muſic was perſerved. It was called the *Cunning Man*. ROUSSEAU was in England and

heard it performed, but he had the mortification to find that nobody was cunning enough to find out the merit of it. Toms, a hanger on of Lord Sandwich, brought out at Covent Garden, through the intereſt of Simpson, the *Hautboy Player*, a very poor tranſlation of *La Buona Figliola* with Piccini's muſic.

Jackson produced an alteration of Milton's *Lycidas*, as a ſubject of condolence on the death of the Duke of York, which was performed but one night. Thornton tranſlated the comedies of Plautus. Hartson wrote the *Counteſs of Saliſbury*. It was originally performed in Ireland, and, with the ſupport of the Barrys afterwards at Drury Lane, but did not prevail ſo as to be a favourite. Hazard, the original proprietor of the Lottery Office, known now by the firm of Hazard and Co. determined to get as much as poſſible acquainted with his name by venturing in a lottery where he was not ſo adroit in calculating the chances. His ticket however, which was a maſque, called *Redowald*, did not go into the theatrical wheel.

Boulton, probably a Liverpool Guinea captain, wrote the *Sailor's Farewel*, or the *Guinea Outfit*. Dossie, principal ſecretary to the ſociety for the

encouragement of Arts and Manufactures, wrote a poor piece called the *Stateſman Foiled*. Walpole, the celebrated author of the *Caſtle of Otranto*, which, as if it had been magical ſpawn, has engendered all the myſteries, enchantments, monſters, and every other ſpecies of extraneous and heterogeneous outrage on probability and nature, that has ever ſince been the delight and terror of weak minds, wrote alſo a tragedy, moſt ſhockingly revolting, called the *Myſterious Mother*. Nothing can be ſo dangerous as ſuch employment for men of talents. Monſters of the mind, like all other monſters ſhould be ſmothered. It was greatly to the honour of the theatre and its manager that this piece was refuſed. If the theatre ſhould get on however the ſame pace it is now going, theſe ſentiments may in a few years be thought mere ſqueamiſhneſs.

Dow, who wrote on oriental ſubjects, produced a tragedy called *Zingis*, and another called *Sethona*, neither of which had any great ſucceſs. Harrod, a Kentiſh man, produced a tragedy called the *Patriot*. It was never acted. Jeres, tranſlated a part of Voltaire, and publiſhed a tragedy called *Richard in Cyprus*. West wrote, for the Dublin theatre, a tragedy called *Ethelinda*. Horde pub-

liſhed, according to one account, thirteen dramatic pieces, and according to all others only one melancholy buſineſs, an opera, called *Damon and Phœbe*. The reader will have no objection to my taking the majority upon this fact.

ARMSTRONG, the celebrated author of the *Art of Preſerving Health*, a poem of uncommon merit, wrote a tragedy, which however was refuſed by GARRICK, called the *Forced Marriage*. Mrs. BURTON, an actreſs, brought out a poor ricketty thing called *Faſhion Diſplayed*. JENNER, a clergyman, wrote, to eke out ſome poems, two dramatic pieces called *Lucinda*, and the *Man of Family*. The beſt is from DIDEROT. HOWARD, who though a lawyer has piqued himſelf upon not having in the whole courſe of his life, written a ſingle ſyllable to the prejudice of his neighbour or the peace of ſociety; and, to keep up this idea perhaps of being completely a harmleſs character, he has written three tragedies, than which nothing can be more perfectly inoffenſive; for they exerciſe no other feeling than patience, and therefore inculcate a very wholeſome doctrine. Theſe pieces are called *Almeyda*, the *Siege of Tamor*, and the *Female Gameſter*.

SHEPHERD, a clergyman, wrote two dramatic pieces, neither of which however were performed, called *Hector*, and *Bianca*. STOCKDALE, who, by GARRICK's intereſt, was appointed chaplain of a man of war, tranſlated TASSO's *Amintas*. Mrs. CELISIA, who was daughter to MALLET, and married a Genoeſe, brought out a piece without ſucceſs called *Almida*. FADE, a ſtrolling player in Ireland, brought a piece there ſtolen from CIBBER, called the *Miraculous Cure*. Mrs. PENNY publiſhed in a volume of poems a piece called the *Brith Day*. MEILON, a very indifferent writer, publiſhed three things called *Emilia*, *Northumberland*, and the *Friends*. BRIDGES, brought out at the Haymarket a thing, which he principally took from COTTON, who tranſlated VIRGIL, called *Dido*. It was not ill writeen in ſome parts, but it was ſtrangely undramatic. He wrote another piece called the *Dutchman*. Theſe productions were neither very creditable, nor very profitable.

CRADDOCK brought out at Covent Garden, a tragedy, called *Zobeide*. This piece is altered from VOLTAIRE's *Les Scythes*, for which compliment VOLTAIRE gave CRADDOCK his thanks, a tribute eaſily obtained from a man whoſe whole ſoul

was vanity. The play was not heightened sufficiently to succeed. O'Brien, the actor, who married into Lord Inchiquin's family, and, to the regret of the public, left the stage very young, brought out at Covent Garden, *Cross Purposes*, a very pleasant farce, taken from *Les Trois Freres* of La Font; and at Drury Lane, a comedy, called the *Duel*, taken from the *Philosophe sans les Scavoir* of Sedaine;* this piece was damned. Hardham, whose trade was a diamond cutter, his employ a snuffman, and his amusement a numberer of Drury Lane Theatre, caught the cacoethes from the last employ, and wrote a piece, which Garrick prudently advised him to keep in the back ground, called the *Fortune Tellers*. Hardham was a great favourite of Garrick, and was remarkably liberal and benevolent, particularly to members of the theatre.

Waldron, the actor, produced the *Maid of Kent*, the *Contrast*, and the *Richmond Heiress*.

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* It is remarkable that when the Critics read Sedaine's piece, they made exactly the same objections to it which were made in England. It was therefore not performed at Court. The author nevertheless ventured a representation of it at the theatre, where it received great applause, and in particular in those parts where the critics had condemned it.

Ascough, well known in the gay world, brought out a tranſlation of Voltaire's *Semiramis*, which could not poſſibly have ſucceeded, it was ſo very weak. To make amends, however, Sheridan adorned it with a moſt exquiſitely written prologue. Chatterton, known by his genius and his misfortunes, wrote, not intended however for the ſtage, the *Tournament*, *Ella*, *Goddwyn*, and the *Dowager*. Pillon, an author who has written with creditable ſucceſs, produced before Garrick's death, the *Invaſion*, which was a ſucceſsful farce, that anſwered a temporary purpoſe.

The remaining dramatic efforts, which it is within my promiſe to record, are of ſo tiny a nature, that it will be in their favour to make them viſible by ſeeing them in a ſwarm. I ſhall therefore only notice their titles, and their authors, the names of ſome of which, are, however, reſpectable, without any particular comment, on purpoſe to ſhew that I have a pleaſure in obliging my readers. Toosey wrote *Sebaſtian*, a tragedy. Mackenzie, the *Prince of Tunis*, a tragedy, and the *Shipwreck*, a tragedy. Warner compleated Thornton's tranſlation of *Plautus*. Keate wrote the *Monument in Arcadia*. Hitchcock wrote for the York theatre, two comedies, called the *Macaroni*,

and the *Coquet*. GAMBOLD wrote the *Martyrdom of Ignatius*. STEWART produced the *Two Engliſh Gentlemen*.

RIDLEY wrote two tragedies; they were called *Jugurtha*, and the *Fruitleſs Redreſs*. PIGUENET, brought out *Don Quizote*. DOBBS produced the *Patriot King*. LADY STRATHMORE wrote a tragedy called the *Siege of Jeruſalem*. WALLIS produced at York the *Mercantile Lovers*. HEARD, the *Snuff Box*, and *Valentine's Day*. FORREST, the *Weathercock*. HODSON, *Arfaces* and *Zoraida*, tragedies, and the *Adventures of a Night*, a farce. DALTON produced a farce, called *Honour Rewarded*. JACKSON, *Elfrid*, *Geralda*, the *Britiſh Heroine*, and *Sir William Wallace*, all tragedies. JACKMAN brought out the *Mileſian*, and *All the World's a Stage*.

COLLIER wrote *Selima and Azor*, ſet by LINLEY. LUND produced *Ducks and Peas*. VAUGHAN brought out at Drury Lane, *Love's Metamorphoſes*, and the *Double Valet*. POTTER tranſlated ÆSCHYLUS and EURIPIDES. Mrs. GARDENER brought out at the HayMarket, the *Advertiſement* and the *Female Dramatiſt*. Mrs. RYVES wrote the *Prude*, and the *Triumph of Hymen*. WARBOYS, the *Preceptor*, and the *Rival Lovers*. JERNINGHAM wrote *Margaret of*

Anjou. Dr. DODD, the *Syracuſan.* GREEN, the *Secret Plot.* RICHARDS, the *Device.* VANDERSTOP, altered the *Gentle Shepherd,* from RAMSAY. HOUGH wrote *Second Thought is Beſt*; Mrs. ROBINSON produced the *Lucky Eſcape,* Lady CRAVEN, the *Sleepwalker.* HILL, the *Goſpel Shop.* WILLET, *Buxom Joan*; and Mrs. BOOTH, the *Little French Lawyer.*

In addition to theſe, which I can particulariſe, I count twenty-ſeven Dramatic pieces which are doubtfully attributed, and one hundred and ſeventy-nine conſidered as anonymous; ſo that I have now, in the courſe of this hiſtory, given an account of more than eight hundred dramatic writers, and about three thouſand one hundred pieces of different deſcriptions. The number of authors in France, during the ſame period, are above nine hundred and fifty, and their pieces amount in number to nearly four thouſand five hundred, ſo that they have a conſiderable advantage in point of number; but I fancy the warmeſt admirer of French Literature will agree without ſcruple that, when the quality of the manufacture is taken into conſideration, we ſhall find an immenſe ballance in our favour in point of value.

CHAP. X.

ACTORS.

I GET now to a critical part of my taſk. I am to ſhew what the merits of thoſe actors were who compriſed the ſchool of GARRICK, to ſee by compariſon whether they equalled or excelled the actors before, and at the time of BETTERTON, and to aſcertain by deduction how much the acting of the preſent day has gradually fallen off ſince it has been obliged to pick up its intelligence without any acknowledged preceptor.

With what ability I ſhall execute this task let my readers judge. I confeſs I undertake it with a mixture of pleaſure and reluctance: pleaſure, becauſe I think it has been almoſt already proved that the acting of GARRICK's pupils was ſuperior to that of BETTERTON's, and reluctance, becauſe I

am afraid it is but too apparent that, when nature ſhall have deſtroyed the few remaining traces of that admirable and difficult art, the ſecret will be wholly loſt.

I know I have to guard myſelf againſt early prejudice, and to uſe every caution, leſt I miſtake unqualified admiration for fixed judgment. Errors, imbibed in youth, are certainly difficult to irradicate; but theſe are generally ſingle and unconfirmed. They have their ſource in the fancy, not in the heart; they are beautiful to the ſight, but ſhrink at the touch; in the abſence of reaſon, they excite pleaſure, but reflection ſhames us into an acknowledgement of the deluſion. On the contrary, when the ſenſes receive thoſe pleaſures which the mind approves, when reiterated deliberation confirms that delight which takes poſſeſſion of the ſuſceptible ſoul, nothing palls, nothing ſatiates; repetition reveals new beauties, and the enjoyment which was born from admiration bears the teſt of time and accompanies the mind to maturity.

Leſt however I may be fallible, leſt this doctrine may be fallible, which I cannot eaſily credit, I ſhall ſtrengthen my own opinions by the opinions of

infinitely better judges than myſelf, till it be confeſſed, whatever I may want of ability, I want nothing of candour, or rectitude.

In point of reputation, as men and members of ſociety, actors in their general eſtimation have declined, from SHAKESPEAR onwards to the preſent hour. See how this has happened. Our immortal bard, who was another ÆSCHYLUS, was, like ÆSCHYLUS, an actor. JONSON was an actor. The beſt authors of that time were actors; and, therefore, in emulation of the Greeks, were the theatres placed under the management of actors. What was the conſequence? Actors accumulated fortunes, were claſſed and eſtimated reſpectably; and, when the troubles of CHARLES the Firſt cloſed the theatre, its members were conſidered as loyal and honourable men, fit to be truſted with commiſſions to fight in the king's cauſe, till through the intereſt of CROMWELL and the puritans, they yielded to the general preſſure of the times.

From that moment the theatre got into extraneous hands, and thence may be dated the firſt ſtep toward the degradation of actors. The names of D'AVENANT, and KILLEGREW, gave cold expectation of any profeſſional encouragement to actors

in their own right. It is true that they were under the immediate protection of the Lord Chamberlain, and could not be otherwiſe than ſafely guarded by their privilege of appeal to that Nobleman, but this ſubjected them to adverſe intereſts, which were ſure to have adverſe conſequences.

The progreſs of this however we have ſeen. We have ſeen even in D'AVENANT's time that the two companies dwindled into the ſize of one, and then were glad enough to unite to keep acting upon its legs. We have ſeen the theatre, after it was ſplit and divided into factions, under RICH, torne, and diſtracted, till at length the actors, with BETTERTON at their head, removed, with the permiſſion of King WILLIAM, to Lincoln's Inn Fields, where, inconvenienced as they were, they had ſucceſs and were reſpected. We have ſeen in what manner, from the various ill conduct of RICH, that he was interdicted by the Lord Chamberlain, with both the patents in his pocket which were granted to D'AVENANT and KILLEGREW. We have ſeen the various changes which fixed CIBBER in the management, at which time acting began to grow into fame and reputation. We have ſeen, immediately after his ſeceſſion, how low it ſunk under the management of perſons who were not actors. We

have ſeen the miſeries of the ſtage in the time of Fleetwood, and we have ſeen it reſcued from thoſe miſeries by Garrick. Garrick is now loſt to us, and what we ſee now, and may hereafter ſee, I rejoice it does not come within my province to notice.

The inference from theſe obſervations naturally is; that, as the theatre has invariably been a ſource of meritorious emolument to every deſcription of actors, as the profeſſion of an actor has been conſidered as perfectly reputable, as the fair privileges of that profeſſion have been accorded and enjoyed as a right which could not be trenched upon, when the property has been confided to actors; and, as the theatre has been, without a ſingle deviation, plunged into difficulties, as the talents by means of which alone a theatre can exiſt, for authors are nothing without actors, have been miſunderſtood, miſapplied, ſlighted and ſet at nought; as ſalaries have been curtailed, mulcts impoſed, taſk-maſters employed, and other unjuſt and unfair means reſorted to, to diſtreſs actors, when the property has fallen into the hands of mere adventurers or men of fortune; ſo it is evidently proved by circumſtances that cannot be controverted, and concluſions that cannot be miſtaken, that the theatre can never

flouriſh to any degree of perfection unleſs confided to the management of actors, and regulated by that paramount authority, which I have contended throughout this work has ever been, and ever ought to be, veſted in the Lord Chamberlain.

Other circumſtances corroborate this beyond all poſſibility of contradiction. Perſons of talents, education, family, have become actors without degradation. Can this be ſo when they are to be conſidered as perſons merely employed, mercenaries, hirelings? Men with theſe recommendations would revolt at ſuch an idea. It will therefore be ſeen that, at the time of SHAKESPEAR, of BETTERTON, of CIBBER, and of GARRICK, a union of abilities upon an enlarged ſcale gave a conſequence and a reſpect to the theatre and to acting, and that at every other period it was chilled and diſcouraged and hid its diminiſhed head.

I come now to conſider when acting was in its greateſt proſperity, and I think it will not be difficult to prove that moment to have been at the time of GARRICK; and, upon the whole, after his return from Italy. His great example had been long operating on the minds of others, and, when practice had grown into maturity, every point of excel-

lence appears to have been attained. We are told that BETTERTON was taught by TAYLOR, BOOTH by BETTERTON, and QUIN by BOOTH. GARRICK, however, ſeems only to have been taught by nature; and, in ſpight of all we can gather of the extraordinary merits of SHAKESPEAR's cotemporary actors, of thoſe afterwards under BETTERTON, and onward to the end of CIBBER's management, there does not appear a demonſtrative reaſon to ſuppoſe that acting reached its conſummation till the appearance of GARRICK.

That GARRICK reached perfection, as far as it is in the power of a human being to be perfect, nothing can controvert. Nature had given him a moſt intelligent and comprehenſive mind; he knew the paſſions and all their diſtinctions, ſhades and gradations, to infinity. He knew all his author expreſſed, all he meant, and was frequently equal to a penetration capable of refining upon the ſentiment he had to utter; ſo that, let the thought be ever ſo beautiful, ever ſo greatly conceived, or admirably written, it came mended from his utterance of it.

To aſſiſt this ſtrong, juſt, and profound judgement, his perſon and face were capable of ſetting off

every character, and every mode of expreſſion to advantage; and ſo great was his command over his form and his features, that the extremes of perſonification, from kingly dignity to driveling idiotiſm, were at his command; but it is enough to ſay, for his fame needs no eulogium, or if it did is it in the power of words to give it, that from the moment he was dreſſed for a part to the time he laid it down, be it what it might, he was no longer GARRICK, but the character he aſſumed: but one part of his acting, which can be eaſily explained, and which it is not only the duty, but within the capacity, of every member of the theatre to acquire, was his correct attention to the buſineſs of the ſcene when others were ſpeaking to him.

The meaneſt performer on the ſtage in this can copy GARRICK. The rules which he laid down for himſelf were, not to ſuppoſe a ſingle auditor preſent; and, not only to fancy he was the character he perſonated, but actually to infuſe into his mind an idea that every thing he ſaw, heard, and felt, was real. He leered at no ladies in the boxes; contemplated no pleaſure in any appointment to be kept after the play; anticipated no hired panegyric in the papers of the next morning; the admiration he received was a tribute from the ſenſibility of the

audience; he realized the fiction; till, at length, all idea of a theatre vaniſhed, and his hearers were willingly deluded into a belief that they were witneſſing ſcenes in real life; for, critically attentive to theſe particulars himſelf, which make half the value of the repreſentation, the other performers caught the fervor, which, diffuſing itſelf to all around, through the medium of a play, the ſtage exhibited a faithful repreſentation of nature.

To enumerate the wonderful and extenſive variety in GARRICK, throughout the whole round of different characters he aſſumed, which for number, ſtyle, or kind, are beyond credibility, would require volumes. The taſk however, though the fact is aſtoniſhing, would not be difficult. Thoſe who have ſeen him muſt remember what they felt, and ſenſations that are imprinted on the mind are eaſily explained. Inſtead, therefore, of ſaying what he was as an actor, I ſhall content myſelf with deſcribing what he was not. In his utterance he was not monotonous, tedious, preciſe, cold, unimpaſſioned; nor did he rant, bellow, flounder, hoop, or ſputter. In his deportment he was not affected, formal, lounging, languid, or awkward; nor did he ſtride, ſtalk, jump, kick, or ſhuffle. He neither buffetted the air with his arms, nor ſhook his head

like a panteen; whiffled and fluttered like a butterfly, or rolled about like a porpus.

His conduct was not diſreſpectful to the audience, nor diſreputable to himſelf; he excited attention, but he did not exact it; though his judgement was conſummate, he always ſubmitted it with deference; he never appeared ſolicitous to inveſtigate a ſentence, but went at once to the ſentiment it enforced; his buſineſs was not to methodize words, but to expreſs paſſions; he never was pertinacious, pedantic, or critical; he neither whined nor declaimed; he acted. In a word, what he uttered ſeemed to be without ſtudy; it ſeemed to be extemporaneous words ariſing from the ſituation conceived at the time, upon the ſpot. Thus his acting could be no other than nature, and thus he excited no cavil upon the meaning of epithets, no creation of opinions, no derilidtion of underſtanding; his power was unequivocally over the heart. In proof of this, in the courſe of all that unexampled variety of characters which he perſonated, combining all the ſituations into which the human paſſions can poſſibly be thrown, he never for a ſingle moment inflated tragedy into bombaſt, nor degraded comedy into buffoonery.

This negative ſtatement ſhews the requiſites which GARRICK poſſeſſed in himſelf, and which he taught to his pupils; and I the more readily try him by this ordeal, becauſe it gives me opportunity to ſhew that, by avoiding thoſe impediments to good acting, which if perſiſted in are completely fatal, every member of a theatre, to that degree of ability which nature and education has given him, may be a good actor. It is on this account I therefore naturally wiſh that it might again be the deſire of actors to emulate, and the determination of the public to tolerate, this only plan by which in the moſt diſtant degree acting can ever be a repreſentation of nature, and reconcileable to truth.

I could with pleaſure go into every particular excellence in GARRICK's acting, but that my limits are ſo confined as to render it impracticable. Indeed it could not be done without eſtabliſhing a broad ſyſtem equal to a treatiſe; I muſt leave it therefore to ſome more able, though not more willing pen. In the mean time, I owe myſelf the duty to ſay, and I beg it may be ſo underſtood, that I have not meant to deſcribe, in my obſervations on this extraordinary man, an actor completely without faults. I only inſiſt that his faults were ſpots in the ſun;

faults which the moſt perfect mortal muſt naturally poſſeſs; faults to which BETTERTON, as well as GARRICK, muſt inevitably have been liable; and, having eſtabliſhed his perfections, which, in compariſon with his faults, were "oſſa to a wart." I think it will be acknowledged, let BETTERTON's excluſive merit have been what it might, that, as the large field which GARRICK traverſed demanded more extenſive and more verſatile powers, and as taking it in a general point of view he was equally excellent every where; it cannot be but his merits muſt have ſtood higher than thoſe of his great predeceſſor.

Next to GARRICK it will be proper to mention BARRY, an actor of moſt extraordinary merit; which was confined, however, to tragedy, and ſerious parts in comedies. In ſome few reſpects it is queſtionable whether he did not excel every actor on the ſtage. Theſe were in ſcenes and ſituations full of tender woe and domeſtic ſoftneſs, to which his voice, which was melifluous to wonder, lent aſtoniſhing aſſiſtance. In ſcenes of an oppoſite deſcription, he threw a majeſty and a grandeur into his acting which gave it a moſt noble degree of elevation. Theſe peculiar qualities which he poſſeſſed in a very ſtriking degree, were greatly manifeſt in

the tender conflicts of the heart wounded Othello, and the haughty ravings of the high minded Bajazet; and they were exquisitely blended in the fond, yet kingly Alexander; but certainly beyond these requisites, BARRY's acting did not extend in any eminent degree.

The turbulent, afflicting, and terrible passions were not at the command of BARRY, which those will witness for me who have heard GARRICK utter the curse in Lear, and who have watched him through the various vicissitudes which mark the guilty ambition of Macbeth. BARRY was wonderfully winning, but he was not superlatively great. He missed of the first grand requisite in tragedy, he excited pity, and delight, but not terror. GARRICK possessed every quality in the same eminent degree. I have noticed already that excessive sensibility conquers too frequently the powers of an actor, and thus BARRY felt himself what GARRICK transferred to the audience. In BARRY they were interested for the actor, in GARRICK for the character.

It cannot be denied however that BARRY was a noble acquisition to the theatre. All exquisitely tender and touching writing came mended from his mouth. There was a pathos, a sweetness, a

delicacy in his utterance, which ſtole upon the mind and forced conviction upon the memory; every ſentiment of honour and virtue recommended to the ear by the language of the author, were rivetted to the heart by the utterance of BARRY.

HOLLAND and POWELL were great acquiſitions to the theatre. Their merits however were as different as poſſible. HOLLAND acquired fame by perſeverance and induſtry, which therefore grew gradually towards perfection. POWELL burſt on the ſtage with every perfection but experience. They had been always intimate friends and their theatrical emulation was creditable to both? *POWELL's acting was ſtrong nature, as luxuriant as a wilderneſs.

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* It is an extraordinary thing that when POWELL died HOLLAND felt a preſentiment that he ſhould ſoon follow him. The laſt time he ever performed he was in unuſual ſpirits. During the evening he related in the Green-room a number of anecdotes and it is remarkable that they always contained ſome alluſion to POWELL. He repeated the lines which COLMAN had written and which he had repeated at POWELL's death. Every thing in ſhort was POWELL. At laſt he uttered thoſe extraordinary words. "The firſt time I ever ſaw POWELL was at a ſpouting club where he and "I performed Poſthumous and Jachimo. The firſt characters we performed "on the ſtage together were Poſthumous and Jachimo. The laſt time we "played together, and, added he, with a ſigh it was the laſt time he ever "played, the characters were Poſthumous and Jachimo." What makes this matter ſingular almoſt beyond belief, he was then dreſſed for Jachimo, and he died a few days after.

It had a thouſand beauties, and a thouſand faults. He felt ſo forcibly that, in any impaſſioned ſcene, tears came faſter than words, and frequently choaked his utterance. If GARRICK had not gone to Italy but had ſtayed at home and honeſtly taught him, there is certainly no height of perfection in tragedy to which ſuch abilities could not have reached; but he hurried over ſo many characters in the ſhort time he was on the ſtage, that it was impoſſible, even had his underſtanding been as great as his conception, for him to have digeſted any of them into any thing like form.

HOLLAND was extremely different from POWELL, both as an actor and a man. Though his natural talents were not ſo ſtrong yet he kept as reſpectable a ſituation, and, through the propriety of his conduct, his company was coveted by the wiſe and the celebrated, while POWELL's weakneſs led him into the ſociety of the vain and the frivolous. HOLLAND had not, nor had POWELL, received a very liberal education, but his intellects were of that ſtrong, clear, and decided kind, they performed for him the task of a tutor ſo well, that his deciſions upon all occaſions were founded in ſound judgment and critical experience. He was free, good natured, chearful, and generous, nor had he an unkind wiſh

to any human creature; he indulged himſelf as much as any young man reaſonably ought to do; yet, with his purſe and his heart ever open, though not ſprung from an opulent origin, which circumſtance he had too much ſenſe to conceal, at the age, I believe, of thirty three he left his family ſix thouſand pounds.

As to the acting of HOLLAND; what he wanted of POWELL's natural requiſities he made up in ſtrong diſcrimination. One was ſuſceptable, the other critical. Whoever remembers their performing Poſthumous and Jachimo will feel the truth of this obſervation. POWELL made the ſtrongeſt firſt impreſſion, HOLLAND pleaſed you beſt upon repetition; POWELL, though he often charmed, ſometimes diſguſted. HOLLAND, even when you could not admire him, gave you no pain. In ſhort POWELL owed to nature what HOLLAND owed to himſelf; and, if after all we are obliged to admit ſomething of preminence on the ſide of POWELL, and regret his loſs as an actor, we cannot refrain from heaving a deeper ſigh when we reflect that in HOLLAND we loſt a moſt valuable member of ſociety.*

* Before I quit this ſubject, I ſhall relate an anecdote relative to the funeral of Poor HOLLAND. He was one of FOOTE's greateſt favourities,

Ross and SMITH were not immediately GARRICK's diſciples, which was a misfortune to Ross; but SMITH's induſtry being always alive to his duty, he ſought every poſſible opportunity of improving by a correct ſtudy of the merit and manner of GARRICK. Thus have fools called HOLLAND and SMITH the copyers of GARRICK. The fair, liberal principle upon which they copied him was emulation, not manner. What painter or poet ought to bluſh for having ſtudied CORREGIO or DRYDEN, till he was capable of infuſing the grace of the firſt and the energy of the latter into his picture or poem! SMITH, greatly to his credit, ſtudied GARRICK

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perhaps in ſome meaſure becauſe the world ſaid he was the retailer of his wit; but there was no occaſion, HOLLAND had wit enough of his own—beſides, ARISTOPHANES dealt in the retail way himſelf. GEORGE GARRICK, being one of HOLLAND's executors, with his uſual good nature (for no man poſſeſſed more) undertook to manage the funeral in a way ſuitable to his friend's circumſtances, for which purpoſe he went to Chiſwick, and ordered a decent vault, and ſuch other preparations as he thought neceſſary. HOLLAND's father was a baker. FOOTE was invited to the funeral, which he certainly attended with unfeigned ſorrow; for, excluſive of his real concern for the loſs of a convivial companion, whenever he had a ſerious moment, he felt with very ſtrong ſuſceptibility. While the ceremony was performing, G. GARRICK remarked to FOOTE how happy he was, out of reſpect to his friend, to ſee every thing ſo decently conducted. "You ſee," ſaid he, "what a ſnug family vault we have made "here." "*Family vault*," ſaid FOOTE, with the tears trickling down his cheeks, "Damme, if I did not think it had been the *family oven*."

under this liberal idea; and the public in conſequence, in their commendation of perfectneſs, induſtry, attention, and gentlemanly demeanor, ſtrongly applauded thoſe particular merits in this actor, which he poſſeſſed, and paſſed by trifling impediments, which could not be called faults, with the candour due to warm devotion and active exertion.

Ross was an object of much greater ſeverity. His indolence and ſupineneſs were intolerable, and unpardonable, for he certainly poſſeſſed very ſtrong requiſites as an actor; but CHURCHILL, throughout the Roſciad, did not write better truth, or ſtronger ſatire, than the two lines applied to this performer; yet, who ſhall deny that Ross was ſometimes, and to his diſgrace, at will, captivating, and fairly able to ſtand up to BARRY? Whoever has by chance ſeen him in his beſt moods perform Eſſex, or Alexander, will agree with me. In ſhort, he was a voluptuous man, and particularly a great eater, therefore he had not the perſeverence to give the neceſſary attention to his profeſſion, and thus he happened to be admirable, or inſufferable, in proportion as he was more or leſs plethoric.

In comedy, as in tragedy, GARRICK led the train;

nay, take it all in all, it is difficult to ſay whether Thalia and Melpomene poſſeſſed him or he either of them with greater ardour, for his devotion to each was equally ſincere, and they were to him equally propitious. No wonder then, with ſuch a ſtimulus, the actors of his day were emulous to attain the ſame perfection according to the force of their reſpective abilities, which were ſo various and extenſive that it is difficult to ſay who merits the firſt notice. I ſhall therefore take them according to ſeniority.

Woodward, though indifferently gifted by nature, except as to his perſon, which was ſo complete that he could not throw himſelf into an inelegant attitude, poſſeſſed ſuch ſound principles of acting, that he is for ever to be regretted. There are characters in real life which appear out of nature. Theſe are fair game for authors; and, when they are well drawn, did we not meet with performers of the admirable deſcription of Woodward, we ſhould loſe the pleaſure of ſeeing ſuch characters well acted. Theſe characters are not general, but particular nature, and therefore it requires ſtrong art and judgement to delineate them. The great point is to ſteer between extravagance and vapidity, a knowledge of effect completely underſtood by Woodward.

Thus, in all the coxcombs, WOODWARD muſt greatly have excelled CIBBER, who deſigned and originally performed them; for WOODWARD even in voice, which was the worſt deduction from his merit by what I could ever underſtand, had the advantage, and when we conſider that, ſuperadded to the experience he had gained by ſeeing them performed in their original manner, he had the opportunity of improving on them by his own obſervation, aſſiſted by the elegance and gracefulneſs of his deportment, there can be no doubt that theſe particular characters have never been performed to perfection but by him.

When we go into a ſpecies of parts ſtill more extravagant, ſuch as the braggart through all its gradations, nothing could have been ſuperior to WOODWARD. BOBADIL, PAROLLES, BESSUS, and others of a ſimilar kind never had certainly upon the whole any ſuch repreſentative. I have already drawn a ſlight compariſon between WOODWARD and the French actor DUGAZON. The ſuperiority however is greatly on the ſide of WOODWARD. The French ſtage knows nothing of that broad humour, ſtrong character, and ſtriking ſituation, which characterize ours. They have their *coups de theatre*, but the general effect is full of frivolity and ſeldom

gets beyond ſprightlineſs. Their *bienſeance* is but another word for vapidity, and then if DUGAZON had poſſeſſed the requiſites of WOODWARD, which he certainly did not in any eminent degree, the extravagance of D'ANCOURT, well drawn, as it was, could not have afforded the ſame opportunity for a diſplay of his talents as WOODWARD found in SHAKESPEAR and JONSON.

YATES was one of thoſe meritorious actors who added to chaſte nature becoming reſpectability. He had his hardneſſes, and thoſe, who, like CHURCHILL, cavil in parcels, and are too acrimonious to be candid, may on this account, condemn him in the lump; but I ſhould not deſpair of proving that YATES had as good an underſtanding as CHURCHILL, and that, as an actor, he accompliſhed his public duty upon honeſter and more reſpectable grounds than the other as an author.

I know of no French actor ſo good as YATES; though, had he been a Frenchman, the Liſimons, Gerontes, and every ſpecies of fathers and guardians characterized by humour and caprice would have been exactly in his way. He had the beſt parts of BONNEVAL, DESSESARTS, and BELLECOUR. On the Engliſh ſtage he reſembled UNDERHILL; but with

conſiderable advantage. No actor was ever more chaſte, more uniform, more characteriſtic; and, though perhaps ſometimes he overſhot thoſe particular ſpots which nature deſigned him to hit, yet upon the whole his acting in an eminent degree was gratifying to the public and exemplary to ſtage.

SHUTER, whoſe ſtrong nature and irreſiſtible humour were highly and peculiarly captivating, muſt be ranked as a theatrical wonder. Neither on the French, nor on the Engliſh ſtage, do we find any one to whom we can compare him. His ſtrong conception, his laughable manner, his perpetual diverſity were his own, and were diſplayed in a thouſand various forms, always extraordinary, and yet always in nature. The extremes of life were never ſo critically diſplayed as by SHUTER. His performance of the Miſer and Maſter Stephen are incontrovertible proofs of this remark. Has any one ſeen him in *Corbaccio*, and will he tell me that acting ever went beyond it?

When he went out of his way, ſo the queſtion was humour, could any thing be ſuperior to SHUTER? I look upon him, as far as it went, to have been one of the beſt burletta ſingers in the

world. Nothing upon earth could have been superior to his Midas. His great fault was indolence; but eccentric qualities will naturally be accompanied by eccentric conduct. Thus we perceive in his acting great inequalities, but those parts of it that were sterling were invaluably so; and, in proof of it, see all those vain attempts at an imitation of him from EDWIN onwards that have degraded acting into buffoonery, of which SHUTER had none, through which even actors of good sense have expected to grow into reputation, till mistaking the way, they have made a sort of JOSEPH's coat of their acting; and, in proportion as they have pursued manner, have lost sight of nature.

WESTON was another of nature's wonders. He seemed as if he had possessed neither idea, nor conception, yet was he endowed with so many chaste and felicitous gifts, that he uttered rather than acted; but it was such utterance that the most accomplished acting never excelled. The French know nothing of actors such as SHUTER and WESTON. Their *naiveté* bears an implication that deserts simplicity and almost goes to cunning. The ideas of the French in any one part of their conduct, either on or off the stage, are never inartificial. They inhale caution, wariness, and distrust,

with their earlieſt breath, and the firſt uſe they make of their tongues is to reaſon, and this obtains among the very loweſt deſcriptions of that nation; therefore, if authors fairly depict their manners, though they may find, and this will be rarely the caſe, *naiveté*, they never will find what an ingenuous Engliſh mind underſtands by the word ſimplicity.

Nokes, and Norris, as I have noticed already, poſſeſſed ſimilar gifts to Weston; whether in an equal degree it will be impoſſible for us to aſcertain; in a ſuperior degree it will be impoſſible for us to allow; but many of my readers have ſeen him in Scrub, Dr. Laſt, and other characters, and I have nothing to do but appeal to their evidence to make out my aſſertion.

Foote ranked reſpectably as an actor, a circumſtance that has not been always granted; for, as peoples principles are ſuppoſed to be vitiated by keeping bad company, ſo thoſe, who have been profeſſedly mimics, have been rarely allowed to have been good actors, which is more an admitted than a real fact. Garrick was an incomparable mimic. Take the circumſtance as it really is and the truth will be this. Mimickry is the eaſieſt thing in the world,

acting the moſt difficult ; for, if this were not admitted, thoſe who imitate cats, dogs, and birds, as well as all the race of ventriloquiſts and mummers of every deſcription, would naturally be good actors. On the contrary, acting muſt have conception, ſoul, ſenſibility, and all thoſe mental qualities, which mimickry has nothing to do with.

Foote was by no means a good mimic. He knew ſingularity to be very catching, and a ſtrong recommendation with the ſuperficial who admire more that which is merely plauſible, than that which is really ſubſtantial ; and therefore he put on ſomething of this kind in order to heighten his acting: which, added to dreſs, an extravagant manner, and other artful reſources, was ſuppoſed to convey a likeneſs of the perſon repreſented, who had never been ſeen by one of his auditors, perhaps, out of five hundred. There were characters, however, where mimickry was totally unneceſſary, that Foote performed admirably, and many of thoſe he wrote himſelf, which were not merely calculated to ridicule individuals, have not ſince him found adequate repreſentatives.

O'Brien, who was ſnatched from the Theatre when he had arrived, though young, to great repu-

tation, would certainly have proved an actor of the firſt conſequence. The eaſe, elegance, and grace in his deportment were peculiar, and his own; and ſpight of his voice, which for light characters was not by any means an impediment, in the repreſentation of a great variety of parts his acting was critically natural, his manner intereſtingly impreſſive, and his deportment uncommonly attractive.

KING, whom I formerly compared to PREVILLE, had, and I am happy, in common with every admirer of good acting, to add, has, much more extenſive merit than had that deſervedly celebrated performer. When we ſpeak of French actors, let their intrinſic merit have been what it might, we can only give them credit for that which they have manifeſted. PREVILLE performed all the Valets, and ſimilar characters to ſuch a degree of perfection, that a revival of MOLIERE, and all celebrated authors was demanded to give opportunity for the diſplay of his talents. It is impoſſible to deny that he poſſeſſed, in the words of his biographer, intelligence, variety, deportment, gaiety, grace, and nature; but, with all theſe admirable requiſites, he could not perform more than what was given him; fortunately enough perhaps, for, as on the French Stage it is a proverb that Harlequin is always Har-

lequin, and Criſpin always Criſpin, ſo PREVILLE was always PREVILLE, and indeed, ſo are French actors always French actors; and the queſtion is not ſo much how they would manage if they were truſted with contraſt, variety, and diverſity, as how they are capable of contraſting, varying, and diverſifying the eternal ſameneſs of ſentiment and ſituation which pervade the moſt perfect pieces on the French Stage.

LE KAIN has been compared to GARRICK, ſo his PREVILLE; but the hiſtorian, in fair juſtice, is obliged to confeſs, of the firſt, that, however, the French actor had taſte, and knew how to ſupport effect, the Engliſh actor had the ſuperiority on the ſide of nature; and, as to the other, that GARRICK performed with equal celebrity, tragedy, and comedy, which it is impoſſible to reconcile on the French Stage. A confeſſion that ſufficiently explains the confined ideas of acting on their theatre.

If PREVILLE, therefore, was to cope with KING, it could be only as to the Valets, for in no other way have they performed parts at all ſimilar; and when it is given, which it eaſily will be, that the French Stage knows no characters of that deſcription which require thoſe powers of acting that are neceſ-

ſary in the performance of Trapanti, Braſs,* Tom, and various other parts on the Engliſh ſtage, the having ſtronger ſituation to manage, better humour to expreſs, and ſounder effect to convey, calls for greater talents, and we are obliged to allow the ſuperiority to incline according as we are biaſſed by the evidence of our ſenſes.

When we go further, and point to ſuch characters as Touchſtone, Malvolio, all the bucks, ſuch as Squire Groom and Sir Harry Beagle, to which I could add a prodigious number of others in various ways, but ſhall however content myſelf with mentioning Sir Peter Teazle, Sir Anthony Abſolute, and Lord Ogleby, which may now be witneſſed in as great perfection as ever, and to which every actor of the preſent day ought to bow out of devotion as to a precious relick, it would be folly any longer to talk of a compariſon between KING and PREVILLE. Good Engliſh acting is like Engliſh punch of which the French know nothing but the lemonade.

It is as difficult to liken KING to any Engliſh

* I am aware that Braſs is French, but D'ANCOURT's Frontin and VANBURGH's Braſs, are greatly different in point of value.

actor. Thoſe who performed characters in his ſtyle at the time of CIBBER ſeem to have been followed by YATES, who, though he was, as I have with pleaſure obſerved, an admirable actor, had a manner perfectly diſtinct. KING is a performer who has thrown novelty into old characters, conſequence into new, and nature into all. Indeed his leading feature is integrity; which quality having been invariably his guide during his whole public and private conduct, he has moſt reſpectably endeared himſelf to the world in general by a diſplay of truth, and nature from the ſtage, and to a large circle of admiring friends by an exerciſe of benevolence, good humour, and every other ſocial virtue.

I lament that I cannot dwell more particularly on the merit of actors. ARTHUR was an actor of conſiderable merit, HAVARD and BERRY demand a tribute of reſpect, SPARKS, DYER, COLLINS, MARTIN, and even BURTON, BRANSBY, VAUGHAN and many others claim a right to be ſpoken of as reputable members of the theatre.

AICKIN has performed at all times with judgment, feeling and nature. His information being extenſive, his knowledge profound, and his diſ-

crimination critical, he has often delighted, and never offended; and, though he has not reached the ſummit of his profeſſion, he has maintained the height at which he arrived, by no means a mediocre ſtation, firm and unſhaken; his guide underſtanding, and his ſupport good ſenſe. The two PALMERS were actors of great merit; the only drawback on both was manner which in the firſt was too refined, and in the other too vulgar. PARSONS, and DODD, muſt be ſpoken of with warmth. Both theſe actors were favourites with GARRICK. The diſcrimination of PARSONS, in parents and guardians, was his own, and he went over this walk in a manner perfectly original, which was the more admirable coming as he did after YATES; beſides he had treaſured up a great fund of knowledge, and was capable of ſpeaking with taſte and judgment to every queſtion concerning the arts, a congenial feeling with thoſe enlarged ideas which particularly belong to acting. DODD's great merit was altogether ſingularity; which, guided by a perfect knowledge of his profeſſion, rendered his exertions very reſpectable.

There are alſo other actors who largely contributed to the reputation of the ſtage, BLAKES, BADDELEY, and even HOLTAM, ſupported the characters

of Frenchmen with great reputation. Nor was their merit confined merely to that caſt of parts. Moody's genteel, and Barrington's blackguard, Iriſhmen, were excellent, and much might be ſaid to ſhew that there was at that time ſcarcely a wheel in the theatrical machine that was not of material uſe in contributing towards the regular, correct, and conſtant rotation of the whole ſyſtem.

I cannot with any propriety finiſh this chapter without noticing that Reddish, Wroughton, Henderson, Wilson, Lee Lewis, and many others were performers of conſiderable merit, and it would give me real ſatisfaction to go particularly into an account of their various talents; but, as they do not properly come under my promiſe, and as the earlieſt parts of an actors exertions are not ſo favourable to report as thoſe when his reputation becomes more confirmed, in which ſituation all thoſe whom I have mentioned above ſtand, it will be better for them, and more becoming in me, to let the judgment on their merits reſt with the public, by whom many of them are now remembered with pleaſure.

CHAP. XI.

ACTRESSES.

HAVING ſpoken of actreſſes in tragedy who ſuſtained the firſt ſituations before GARRICK went to Italy, I ſhall now dwell a little upon thoſe who ſtrove to fill their vacant places after his return.

Mrs. YATES was a performer of extraordinary merit. If ſhe had a fault it was an emulation of the beſt French actreſſes; which gave a declamatory air to her delivery, but in her it was leſs a fault than it could have been in any other actreſs, becauſe her voice was ſo wonderfully well calculated for this part of acting, that what would have appeared monotonous in any other was in her penetrating to admiration. In all the complaints of ſuffering innocence, ſhe was pathetically affecting; her melancholy and deſpondency excited generous pity,

and her grief was repaid with the tear of commiſeration.

This however was not the boundary to her acting. In ſcenes of animated paſſion and haughty fierceneſs, her manner was commanding and her expreſſion majeſtic. She had all the grand and noble requiſities of tragedy in great perfection. If ſhe perſonated pride, ſhe maintained it even in diſappointment. If greatneſs, ſhe never loſt ſight of its dignity however fallen. Her merits were in the nature of thoſe of BARRY. Her queens were full of elevation, and her lovers of ſtrong ſenſibility, but here we muſt ſtop. Grandeur and tenderneſs comprized the whole of her talents; the intermediate paſſions had nothing to do with them; they entirely conſiſted of the power to awe her auditors into admiration, or melt them into tears.

Mrs. BARRY had more of GARRICK's merit in tragedy and was equal to quickneſs, paſſion, rage and an expoſition of all the terrible and turbulent paſſions. Common grief was too tame for her expreſſion. She knew not how to inſinuate herſelf into the heart, her mode was to ſeize it. Admiration was not enough; ſhe muſt beget aſtoniſhment. This difficult effect it muſt be confeſſed her acting

very often produced; but it ſeldom happens that ſuch bold and forcible ſtrokes of art are free from inequality. It required GARRICK's perfectneſs in a conception of all the paſſions to be excellent in theſe; beſides turbulent men may be admitted, but turbulent women are unlovely and loſe ſomething of feminine delicacy.

Mrs. PRITCHARD was perhaps the only actreſs who had art enough to reconcile theſe jarring intereſts. She was every where great, every where impreſſive, and every where feminine. Mrs. BARRY was ſometimes below and ſometimes above the ſtandard; ſometimes, I had almoſt ſaid, vulgar, and ſometimes, I may truly ſay, wonderful. To ſpeak truth there could not be two actreſſes who were ſo well calculated to ſet off the perfections of each other as Mrs. YATES, and Mrs. BARRY. The hiatus created by Mrs. YATES the powers of Mrs. BARRY were exactly ſuited to fill, and perhaps, though I will not allow one to be completely equal, taken ſeperately, to Mrs. PRITCHARD in Jane Shore, or the other to Mrs. CIBBER in Alicia, yet their acting ſo exactly ſorted together, and there was by means of contract ſo peculiar a felicity in its operation, that it is difficult to believe the public ever ſaw better collective effect than in

thoſe characters which were ſo often performed by Mrs. YATES and Mrs. BARRY.

Theſe two actreſſes engroſſed the principal reputation in their time; Mrs. WARD, Miſs MACKLIN, Mrs. HAMILTON, Miſs BRIDE, Mrs. FITZHENRY and others, had done the ſtate ſome ſervice; but, either at that time had diſappeared or were diſappearing. Mrs. WARD had many excellent requiſites but ſhe was unequal, almoſt as unequal as Ross. She performed, however, at times to admiration, and would have ſucceeded better had ſhe not been at Covent Garden, where the play was generally neglected for the pantomime, and would have been performed to empty benches for the firſt half of it, had not RICH eſtabliſhed a rule to admit no auditor during any part of the evening at leſs than full price.

Miſs MACKLIN performed at times reſpectably, but ſhe was a parrot, and uttered what had been taught her by her father, as a taſk got by heart, which ſhe ſeemed to have neither taſte nor inclination for. Mrs. HAMILTON, the ſtock Covent-Garden Queen, had a buſtling ſomething in her manner that might have been endured, if the public had not been accuſtomed to Mrs. PRITCHARD. As to Miſs BRIDE, ſhe retired ſo haſtily ſtom the

Stage, that there was no forming any judgment of what ſhe would have been, had ſhe remained; and for Mrs. FITZHENRY, ſhe croſſed the Shannon to exhibit a new ſpecies of acting, which, captivating as it might be in Ireland, was not reliſhed here. The reader will excuſe me from mentioning inferior actreſſes to theſe in tragedy, who, however, let their natural requiſites have been what they might, always ſucceeded beſt in proportion as they ſtudied in the ſchool of GARRICK.

I muſt not, however, forget to notice Miſs YOUNGE, afterwards Mrs. POPE. GARRICK had always what he uſed to call a biſque in his ſleeve, which was a ſtroke of policy uſeful both to him and to the theatre. It was no other, than to fix upon an object of merit, in order to curb other performers, when he either knew or fancied their conduct was likely to grow overbearing, or in any other way troubleſome. REDDISH was produced in this manner to awe POWELL, and Miſs YOUNGE was produced to leſſen the conſequence of Mrs. BARRY.

With this lady GARRICK took moſt uncommon pains. It was not, however, till after a variety of experiments that ſhe gained that hold of the public, which ſhe long and deſervedly kept. It is needleſs

to ſay what were her particular merits, they are too recently in the recollection of the public, to be eaſily forgot. They had to the laſt a ſpice of her preceptor, and even her manner of filling the ſtage, gave a ſtrong idea of ſtage conduct in uſe five and thirty years ago.

As to actreſſes in comedy, Mrs. CLIVE maintained an undiminiſhed reputation till ſhe took leave of the public, which was in 1768. She had then lived to ſee her pupils, Mrs. GREEN, and Miſs POPE, in poſſeſſion of high public favour; both of whom, however, were by no means manneriſts. Nature had largely furniſhed them with mental wealth; the experience of Mrs. CLIVE had only ſhewn them how to lay it out to advantage. Thus, though they were both admirable in Chambermaids and Hoydens, and indeed almoſt every other comic part, they were neither like each other, nor like their principal, though perfectly and always in nature.

Mrs. GREEN had humour, even to drollery. She had ſomething of SHUTER, and ſomething of her father. Theſe were not exactly the talents of Miſs POPE; who, however, though perfectly unaffected herſelf, exceeded Mrs. GREEN in aſſuming fineſſe and affectation. Perhaps, Mrs. CLIVE never aped

mock gentility better. I cannot conceive how the Aunt and the Niece in the *Clandeſtine Marriage* can ever again be perſonated to the ſame degree of perfection; but to dwell upon comparative excellence is next to cavilling. Some of my readers remember Mrs. CLIVE, many Mrs. GREEN, and all Miſs POPE. To the firſt of theſe claſſes my remarks will be recogniſed for truth, as they relate to thoſe three performers; to the ſecond, as they regard the two laſt; and the third, in the characters Miſs POPE has now the good ſenſe to perform, will have a juſt and a faithful idea of the manner in which parts of that deſcription were acted before boldneſs and vulgarity uſurped the place of truth and nature.

With Mrs. ABINGTON came a ſpecies of excellence which the Stage ſeems never before to have boaſted in the ſame perfection. The higher parts in comedy had been performed chaſtly and truely, perhaps in theſe particulars more ſo than by this actreſs. There was a peculiar goodneſs gleamed acroſs the levity of Mrs. PRITCHARD, and by what we can learn of Mrs. BRACEGIRDLE, who ſeems to have poſſeſſed the ſame captivating ſort of manner which diſtinguiſhed Mrs. ABINGTON, ſhe was in theſe characters natural and winning; but it remained for her ſucceſſor to add a degree of grace,

faſhion, and accompliſhment to ſprightlineſs, which was no ſooner ſeen, than it was imitated in the politeſt circles.

Mrs. BRACEGIRDLE, let her merit have been what it might, did not perform CIBBER's coquettes; and though that author waited for Mrs. OLDFIELD before he accompliſhed Lady Betty Modiſh, yet, however admirable ſhe might have been in the repreſentation of thoſe characters, they did not appear to be ſo exactly in her way, as Lady Townly and other parts which had a higher degree of conſequence attached to them. Mrs. ABINGTON kept critically to coquettes, and there can be no doubt, take the round of them through, and it is pretty extenſive, that more uniform good acting never was manifeſted.

I have already ſpoken comparatively of Mrs. ABINGTON, and Madame BELLCOUR; but with no view to aſſociate them in elegance and grace, which the characters Madame BELLCOUR perſonated would not in the ſame degree admit of. The French actreſs perſonated French coquettes to admiration, but I have already obſerved, ſpeaking of KING and PREVILLE, that every thing among the French is underwritten. They know nothing of Beatrice,

Lady Betty Modiſh or Millamant. The likeneſs is in thoſe higher kind of chambermaids who aped their miſtreſſes, and thus exactly, as we have been accuſtomed to ſay KING and ABINGTON, inſtead of Tom and Phillis, ſo it was impoſſible to ſpeak of PREVILLE without aſſimilating the idea of BELLCOUR.

In addition to the grace, the eaſe, and the elegance, with which Mrs. ABINGTON perſonated characters in high life, and aped politeneſs in chambermaids, her taſte for dreſs was novel and intereſting. She was conſulted by ladies of the firſt diſtinction, not from caprice as we have frequently ſeen in other inſtances, but from a decided conviction of her judgment in blending what was beautiful with what was becoming. Indeed dreſs took a ſort of ton from her fancy, and ladies, both on the ſtage and off, piqued themſelves on decorating their perſons with decency and decorum, and captivating beholders by a modeſt concealment of thoſe charms, which, in imitation of the French women, who never knew the ſenſation of a bluſh, the reſult of Engliſh feminine rectitude, our females now, to the diſgrace of the age, make it their ſtudy to expoſe.

Miſs ELLIOT was a charming actreſs. Maria in the *Citizen* certainly never was properly repreſented but by her. Indeed the different characters which ſhe performed with WOODWARD after his return from Ireland were admirably ſuſtained, and a few years would certainly have marked her as a very accompliſhed actreſs, had not her early death deprived the ſtage of a moſt valuable ornament.

I might with great propriety ſpeak of other actreſſes and it would give me pleaſure to dwell on their various merits; but to mention thoſe who were, at the time I am confined to, mere novices, would be to place them in a diſadvantageous point of view, and to notice others, who, though reſpectable, poſſeſſed only ſecondary ſituations, it would be difficult to know where to ſtop. I ſhall therefore content myſelf with having given this ſlight, and I muſt confeſs, inadequate deſcription, of thoſe few whoſe abilities were the moſt prominent during the time GARRICK had the management of the theatre.

CHAP. XII.

SINGERS.

THOUGH I ſhould conceive that I have ſaid every thing on the ſubject of muſic itſelf and its compoſers, that can be requiſite, or indeed that ought to occupy a place in this work, it ſtill remains for me to ſpeak of ſingers. I ſhall however confine myſelf to Engliſh ſingers, many of whom have at different periods poſſeſſed admitted reputation equal to the Italians, and real reputation ſuperior to them.

Though we know of ARABELLA HUNT, Mrs. TOFTS, Mrs. ROBINSON, and many other celebrated Engliſh female ſingers, we are not ſo correct as to men, and the reaſon is, that nothing in the way of public ſinging has been conſidered of conſequence enough to record, except what related to the opera.

Maſques however had been performed with great celebrity; and, when the *Beggar's Opera* begat ſo many muſical pieces, the theatre gave ſuch a tone of ſimplicity to Engliſh muſic, that not only celebrated ſingers began to be known, but thoſe who had before conceived it indiſpenſibly neceſſary to be muſicians profeſſionaly, in order to attain reputation as ſingers, were aſtoniſhed to find that a good voice, a correct ear, a little feeling, and an unaffected utterance embraced the whole myſtery.

Every actor furniſhed with theſe materials became preſently a ſinger. The public began to feel inſtead of admire, and that admiration which had ſo diſgraced Engliſh manlineſs into effeminacy by laviſhing ſo much money and ſo much praiſe on the treble of FARINELLI, turned all at once into applauſe at the baſs of LEVERIDGE. As, however, it will better anſwer my purpoſe to bring before the reader's view thoſe ſingers whom ſome of them may remember, I ſhall take the period when BEARD, and Mrs. CIBBER, were ſo greatly celebrated, and carry the ſubject as far onward as will elucidate what I think it material to ſay upon this head.

BEARD was a ſinger of great excellence. His

voice was ſound, male, powerful, and extenſive. His tones were natural and he had flexibility enough to execute any paſſages however difficult, which taſk indeed frequently fell to his lot in ſome of HANDEL's oratorios; but, with theſe qualifications, where the feelings were moſt rouſed, he was, of courſe, the moſt excellent. If he failed at all it was in acquired taſte, which I will venture to pronounce was a moſt fortunate circumſtance for him; for I never knew an inſtance where acquired taſte did not deſtroy natural expreſſion; a quality ſelf-evidently as much preferable to the other as nature is to art.

I have already ſaid that I conſider BEARD, taken altogether, as the beſt Engliſh ſinger. He was one of thoſe you might fairly try by SHAKESPEAR's ſpeech to the actors. He did not mouth it, but his words came trippingly over the tongue; he did not out HEROD HEROD, but he begot a temperance that gave his exertions ſmoothneſs; he never outſtepped the modeſty of nature, nor made the judicious grieve; in ſhort he never did more than was ſet down for him, he never ſet on a quantity of barren ſpectators to applaud while ſome neceſſary queſtion of the ſong ſtood ſtill; he let his own diſcretion be his tutor, and held the mirror up to

nature. Well might one apoſtrophize in imitation of *Hamlet.*

Oh there be ſingers that I have liſtened to, and heard others applaud, aye, and encore too, that neither having the accent of Eunuch, man, or beaſt, yet a mixture of all three, or poſſeſſing a ſingle trait of fancy, taſte, or expreſſion, have ſo ſoared, ſo ſunk, and ſo cantabileed, that one would have thought ſome Ventriloquiſt had made ſingers, and not made them well, they imitated braying ſo abominably. BEARD was the reverſe of all this; beſides he was very valuable as an actor. In the *Jovial Crew, Love in a Village, Comus, and Artaxerxes,* he gave proof of this in a degree ſcarcely inferior to any body.

LOWE was a great favourite and perhaps had a more even and mellow voice than BEARD; and, in mere love ſongs when little more than a melodious utterance was neceſſary, he might have been ſaid to have exceeded him, but it was in the nature of thoſe particulars, in a much inferior degree however, that BARRY excelled GARRICK. LOWE loſt himſelf beyond the namby pamby poetry of Vauxhall; BEARD was at home ever where.

Coming forwarder we get to VERNON; a moſt powerful inſtance of what good ſenſe does for a ſinger. He had no voice, without which quality it is difficult to ſuppoſe a ſinger at all, and it is impoſſible that he could have arrived to any degree of reputation had he not been favoured by nature with ſtrong conception, quick ſenſibility, and a correct taſte. With theſe and nothing more, he made himſelf a moſt reſpectable favourite, and it was impoſſible to hear him without ſaying, "what an admirable ſinger that man would have been, had his voice been equal to his judgment." VERNON beſides this was a good actor.

REINHOLD, who did not ſucceed ſo well, will ſolve this ſeeming paradox relative to VERNON, and ſhew clearly how much natural expreſſion muſt invariably triumph over acquiredtaſte. REINHOLD was a good muſician, and not a bad actor, he was really poſſeſſed of a voice, not however of the firſt rate, but, taking the road in which ſo many ſingers have been bewildered, leaving the manly part of ſinging for the leſs natural qualification of modulating through all the meanders of *falcetto*, he injured his reputation and rendered thoſe gifts of nature contemptible which in VERNON would have commanded reſpect. It is conſidered as a very curious thing

that the beſt ſingers in all countries, have been, generally ſpeaking, the worſt muſicians, but nothing can be eaſier to explain. Voices utter melodies, and melodies are not the ſcience itſelf, but the principle on which it is formed.

MANZOLI, and LOVATINI, were the beſt ſingers on the Italian ſtage; BEARD, VERNON and BANNISTER on the Engliſh.*

BANNISTER was in many reſpects ſuperior to any ſinger that perhaps ever lived. The body and volume of voice which he poſſeſſed were only equalled by its ſweetneſs and intereſt. He had as much taſte, as much playfulneſs, and as extenſive power as the moſt faſhionable of thoſe ſingers who think ſinging totally conſiſts in flexibility, and that a voice cannot be exerciſed to perfection unleſs when it is flying to the bridge of the fiddle, and ſliding back again in chromatics; but BANNISTER had too much ſenſe to uſe this power, except when

* MANZOLI and GUARDUCCI were competitors in Italy. The public were to determine which ſung beſt. MANZOLI had the voice of the ſpectators, GUARDUCCI of the muſicians; what was the conſequence? MANZOLI made a fortune every where, GUARDUCCI did nothing any where.

he had an inclination to ſhew how ridiculous it is. Thus in the *Son-in-law* he ſung, "Water parted from the ſea," with as much taſte, as much ſweetneſs, and as much variety as TENDUCCI, at the ſame time that he introduced a degree of burleſque into it that gave the bluſh to modern ſinging. BANNISTER had no neceſſity to convey any thing of this extraneous kind into his general ſinging. That was equally creditable to the poet, to the muſician, and to himſelf. Inſtead of ſurprizing, he delighted, and the fine manly accents he conveyed charmed the ear, and intereſted the heart.

Female ſingers in England have been unqueſtionably ſuperior, take them all in all, to thoſe of any country in the world, and it is little to ſay that, at thoſe ſeveral moments the public have diſgracefully ſet themſelves up to eſpouſe the cauſe of Italians, as if muſic wholly depended on them and their caprice, there were Engliſh women clearly of greater capacity. Every thing that happened at the time of Mrs. TOFTS, Mrs. HUNT, and Mrs. ROBINSON we'll paſs by, though perhaps it might not be difficult to prove that while theſe were neglected for CUZZONI, and FAUSTINA, and others according to the times when they appeared, it was totally unneceſſary to import Italian ſinging and

Italian impertinence, when ſinging, in as great perfection, was to be found in Engliſh women, and modeſty along with it.

I am confirmed in this opinion by a comparative view of the Engliſh and Italian female ſingers in my own recollection. Among the Italian, perhaps after all SESTINI was the beſt. I can juſt remember thoſe who came immediately before the *Buonna Figliola*, and it has been my uniform remark that the Italian women have ſung better than the men; but their plaintive ſingers have been the beſt, and and we have never heard any of their cantabile ſingers who piqued themſelves upon a large compaſs and the execution of difficult paſſages, but their tone has been ſo naſal, that we might have miſtaken them for the hautboy or the clarinet that accompanied them. SCOTTI was a ſweet ſinger, ZAMPERINI a graceful ſinger, indeed this laſt was a kind of female VERNON, but what were any of them in point of voice, delicacy, and ſweetneſs, compared to Mrs. ARNE, Miſs BRENT, or even Mrs. VINCENT; but when we come forward and ſpeak of Mrs. SHERIDAN, and Miſs HARROP, the merit of the Italian females ſinks to nothing.

I regret that I am conſtrained to notice the different talents of theſe ſingers in a ſhort and general way, for I ſhould to be glad to make out my poſition by expatiating largely on them. Mrs. PINTO, poſſeſſing an exquiſite voice and being under a maſter, the great characteriſtics of whoſe muſical abilities were natural eaſe and unaffected ſimplicity, was a moſt valuable ſinger. Her power was reſiſtleſs, her neatneſs was truly intereſting and her variety was inceſſant. Though ſhe owed a great deal to nature, ſhe owed a great deal to ARNE, without whoſe careful hand her ſinging might perhaps have been too luxuriant.

Mrs. ARNE was deliciouſly captivating. She knew nothing in ſinging or in nature but ſweetneſs and ſimplicity. She ſung exquiſitely, as a bird does, her notes conveyed involuntary pleaſure and undefinable delight. It ſhould for ever be reiterated that ſingers of this deſcription never outrage the poet nor the muſician. Indeed I conceive that there is a ſpecies of ingratitude in ſuch violation, for without the poet and the muſician what would become of the ſinger?

Mrs. VINCENT, like LOWE, depended almoſt upon her voice which was very charming. In ſhort

it was that true Engliſh voice which has an evenneſs, a fullneſs, a ſolidity, that one might analize ſo as to ſhew that nothing Italian can have. She was deſervedly a great favourite, and ſung ſongs of eaſe and ſweetneſs with great delicacy.

There is a kind of voice, I will not ſay peculiarly Engliſh, but much more beautiful and perfect, and more common in England than any where elſe. Such a voice had Mrs. KENNEDY, who, had ſhe have been ſuffered to keep to parts particularly adapted for her, would have augmented that public admiration ſhe ſo meritoriouſly excited to aſtoniſhment; but, by having the good nature to perſonate parts totally unfit for her, a left handed policy in a manager, by the bye, who cannot keep up his real intereſt without keeping up the conſequence of the performer, we had perpetually the worſt part of her ſinging. In ſome light characters this conduct was particularly reprehenſible.* In ſhort Mrs. KEN-

* In *Artaxerxes* Mrs. KENNEDY was allotted the part from which the opera takes its title, and in which ſhe was certainly reſpectable; but the ſongs were not in her voice, and in every other reſpect it did not ſuit her. She ought to have performed Arbaces, which was exactly in her compaſs, and the different paſſages in the airs have a peculiar neatneſs which her voice was remarkably calculated to execute. "Amid a thouſand rack-"ing woes," which is perhaps the moſt maſterly ſong in the opera, ſhe

NEDY was one of thoſe ſingers who put us in mind of the heartineſs of our national character, which, after faſhion and folly have for a time flattered us out of it, we reſume juſt upon the ſame principle as we cheriſh a kind and ſincere friend, who, forgetting our wanderings, kindly points out the road to comfort and content.

I could mention many other female ſingers of very reſpectable talents, whoſe names the reader will ſupply for me. Among theſe, however, I ought to confine myſelf to theatrical ſingers. I cannot help nevertheleſs reminding the public of the great and extraordinary merit of Miſs HARROP, and Mrs. SHERIDAN, both of whom were juſt ſeen and then loſt.

I own I prefer Mrs. SHERIDAN before Miſs HARROP, and indeed before any ſinger I ever heard, even to this moment; but this is no ill compliment to Miſs HARROP, becauſe, charming and exquiſite as they were, her talents were confined to concert ſinging. The talents of Mrs. SHERIDAN, had the

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would have ſung with prodigious effect, for it was extraordinary that her voice had as much flexibility as volume.

experiment been made, would been found to have been univerſal; but the public were not ſo far to be obliged.

Thoſe who have never heard Mrs. SHERIDAN can be no more able to conceive the force and effect of her merit, than I can be capable of deſcribing it. I can eaſily make it underſtood that, if ſhe was poſſeſſed of every perfection and free from every fault as a ſinger, ſhe muſt have been ſuperior to every other, but this is theory; the practical part of the argument cannot be felt but by thoſe who were fortunate enough to hear her, who, if they have any recollection and will take the trouble to repeat MILTON's paſſage uttered by Comus immediately after he has heard the Lady ſing Sweet Echo, they will find their ſenſations were at that time delighted equal to that deſcription, for indeed, "ſhe took the priſoned ſoul and lapped it in "Elyſium."

I ſhall only ſay farther as to ſinging, that it cannot be excellent except in proportion as it joins in correſpondence, which ſome writer has explained to mean intelligence of the heart, with the poetry and the muſic it has to convey. Every thing extraneous, every thing forced, every thing in ſhort,

as SHAKESPEAR expreſſes it, overdone, or come tardy of, though it may ſurprize cannot delight; and, if it cannot delight, it is from the purpoſe of ſinging, and though unskilful auditors may applaud, it cannot but make the judicious grieve, the cenſure of one of which, muſt, in the allowance of every man of ſenſe, outweigh a whole theatre of others.

CHAP. XIII.

RECAPITULATION.

HAVING by every certain, every probable, and even every poſſible circumſtance, which I have conſidered neceſſary to ſelect from thoſe materials I ſupplied myſelf with for this undertaking, endeavoured to draw the reader's attention to the antiquity of the ſtage, its operation upon manners both generally and abſtractedly, its influence over the mind, its capability of poliſhing and refining our ſocial nature, and thoſe various ways, in which, in proportion as it is reſpectably and worthily conducted, it may at all times be conſidered as an object of national importance, I ſhall now very briefly recapitulate thoſe leading particulars which may ſerve unerringly to demonſtrate by what means it has at any time, and in any country loſt its conſequence, by what means that conſequence has become irre-

trievable, by what means it has, or could have been retrieved, and by what means alone it can poſſibly be kept up and eſtabliſhed.

The theatre is a ſchool of morality, or it is nothing. Its orginal eſtabliſhment in every country has had this broad feature. The exploits of heroes, the maxims of philoſophers, and the good of mankind were the foundation to which the fabric, even to the ſuperſtructure, however fancifully it might have been ornamented, tended in all directions and as by one conſent. A ſtability of this adamantine kind could not have been confirmed but by the encouragement of workmen of the ſame deſcription of thoſe who reared the ſtructure. Who were theſe? Authors and actors.

Every one of the conſequences therefore which we are to examine are clearly traceable to this ſingle ſource, and it only remains to ſee whether at any time there has been ſuch a dearth of good authors and actors as to weaken the theatre by the abſence of valuable exertions, in which caſe no blame is to be any where imputed; whether good authors and actors have expected terms that were unreaſonable, and ſuch as could not poſſibly be accorded, in which caſe the blame would be imputable to them;

or whether their labours have been exacted from them upon unworthy and degrading terms, in which case common sense must impute the blame to their employers; and lastly to what authority authors and actors ought to be amenable.

Though neither Greece nor Rome are exactly cases in point as to the illustration of this argument because in both instances the profligacy of the people brought on the moment which terminated the theatre and the country together, yet we have enough to go upon to shew these positions to be critically right. In the earlier periods of Greece before comedy was generally established, in short before Aristophanes, the theatre was in the hands of poets, and actors, and under the inspection of Government, at which time it was as material an object in its place as the areopagus, and held as distinguished a reputation. It was managed by the great triumvirate; but this was not enough. Judges were appointed and every exhibition underwent an ordeal, but when Aristophanes, the most licentious poet that ever lived, became possessed of the stage, it soon hastened to destruction for no reason upon earth but because it was uncontrouled.

In Rome, the theatre could have no character becauſe the actors had an aſcendancy over the poets. It was regulated certainly, if the word could be properly be allowed me, by Government; but of what nature were the regulations? a crooked and even wicked policy by which the theatre dictated to the people as a cloak for private treachery. Even AUGUSTUS, with all his patronage and all his attachment to genius, tolerated rope dancers in preference to poets.

The Spaniſh theatre for the ſame reaſon had as little character as the Roman. Thoſe who have read *Gil Blas* will ſee ſome notable proofs that poets were ſubſervient to actors. The Portugueſe theatre was the ſhadow of the Spaniſh, the Italian theatre was a chaos of Greek and Roman rubbiſh, and the German theatre has as little anſwered the purpoſe of the ſtage, owing to the uncontroled licence permitted to poets; who, though not of the breed of Ariſtophanes, are nevertheleſs as dangerous to ſociety, for they have tainted the manners of Europe, and in particular of England, with productions which violate probability, wound morality, terrify inſtead of delight, menace inſtead of conciliate, in ſhort, which among every outrageous and monſtrous doctrine, teach filial ingratitude, encourage adultery,

and circulate ſuch revolting and ſcandalous tenets as thirty years ago would have been ſpurned at by an Engliſh audience with ineffable indignation.

If then we have ſeen that the conditions upon which alone the theatre can ſtand firmly upon its true baſis were only obſerved for a ſhort time in primitive Greece, at what time, and among what people, has it ever enjoyed that reputation, which, according to the doctrine here laid down, a combination of certain reciprocal intereſts are alone capable to give it? I anſwer from CORNEILLE, to VOLTAIRE, almoſt uninteruptedly in France, and from SHAKESPEAR to 1777, in England; except during the intervals from the Reſtoration to BETTERTON's ſeceſſion, during the fluctuations, immediate previous to CIBBER's management; and from CIBBER's ſeceſſion to the 1747, when GARRICK became manager.

In France we ſhall not find any inſtance when the proprietors of the theatre were managers. Indeed in general they were mere landlords, and paid by a certain rent; for the reſt, all which we have particularly ſeen, the managers were actors, committees of whom decided upon the reception of plays into the theatre which were finally diſpoſed

of by the public; and, in every difference of opinion either concerning authors or actors, or in any other poſſible way that could affect the intereſt of the theatre, the parties reſpectively had a right of appeal to court, where all grievances were redreſſed, and that the grand object might be always obtained by ſtimulating the exertions of actors, their various merits were equitably eſtimated, and, when at length their labours were creditably ended, it became as honourable to retire upon a penſion from the ſtage, as from the army, or the navy.

The face of the Engliſh management during thoſe particular periods that I deſcribe wore the ſame aſpect which I have ſufficiently gone over in a preceding chapter and which will abundantly prove the poſition I have here laid down, the moſt material part of which has this tendency; that, whenever proprietors of theatres, are neither actors nor authors, and are no further connected with the intereſt of the concern than relates to the emolument it produces, without being reſponſible for its general fame, the exertions of authors and actors will infallibly be diſregarded and the theatre by receiving all its advantage from gewgaws and ſpectacle will ſink from its reputation, its conſequence,

and its honour, and loſe its influence as a ſchool of morality.

I ſhall ſhortly ſtate a few circumſtances to confirm this laſt poſition and go over ſome particulars relative to the ſtage, during the period between GARRICK's return from Italy and the diſpoſal of the Drury-lane patent; after which I ſhall take my leave of the reader.

My arguments go to prove that emolument alone, however obtained, has been the view of all thoſe who have bought into the theatres, that the fame and fortune of thoſe men without whoſe exertions the ſtage can have no legitimate pretenſion to public countenance, have never been properly attended to, and that therefore thoſe means have been conſtantly reſorted to, however deſtructive to the general intereſt of the theatre, which are moſt likely to produce the fulleſt houſes.

When the licentiouſneſs of the ſtage called for the animadverſions of PRYNNE, and COLLIER the patents were held by purchaſers. When CIBBER came, at which time the proprietors only received a rent, decency and decorum were reſtored. During the time of HIGHMORE, FLEETWOOD, AMBER,

and GREEN, and indeed till GARRICK, the real intereſt of the theatre was deſerted. Authors and actors were conſidered as auxiliaries rather than principals, and every ſpecies of profligacy and diſorder prevailed. During the whole management of GARRICK the theatre enjoyed greater repute than ever it had known. Further than that, to be conſiſtent, I have no title to inveſtigate; but it is nevertheleſs proper that I make out my poſition by ſhewing the danger that may ariſe from extraneons intereſt.

Extraneous intereſt may ruin the theatre. It may conſolidate the two theatres into one general intereſt that may hold authors and actors at defiance, it may ſtretch the two theatres into the ſize of four. It may pay enormous expences by laying additional charges on the benefits of authors and actors which benefits, after all, by the admiſſion of free tickets may at laſt be cut to nothing. It may encourage contemptible performances, which, by the aſſiſtance of the newſpapers, may be crammed down the throats of the public after being damned on the firſt night. It may import foreign immorality and call in the aſſiſtance of ſhew and finery, monſters and conjurations, to the annihilation of Engliſh merit. All this and a great deal more it

may do. Now let us ſee how ſuch conſequences muſt infallibly operate.

No theatres in the kingdom, except thoſe in London, produce the ſmalleſt novelty. If therefore performances of this deſcription obtain at the two theatres, they go through the whole nation and extend to Ireland, and Scotland, and therefore are ſure, the ſource being contaminated, to poiſon the general taſte. Thus genius, for whoſe ſupport ſurely the theatres were originally intended, may retire unknown and neglected to deplore the ingratitude of the moſt benevolent country upon earth, and therefore, let the theatre be ſupported by whatever property it may, it can never expect any thing like permament fame, or fair reputation, unleſs the primary conſideration be the encouragement of authors and actors.

There are yet ſome gleanings relative to the ſtate of the ſtage. It is neceſſary that I ſhould notice by what means the queſtion came to be decided in relation to full price; which, having been originally eſtabliſhed to reimburſe the expence of new pantomimes, had grown ſo enormouſly into an abuſe, that managers announced it when they thought proper. This at length produced a riot,

which began at Drury-Lane, where GARRICK, with great good ſenſe, redreſſed the grievance. Covent-Garden however reſiſted, under an idea that ſuch performances as *Artaxerxes* were even more expenſive than pantomimes, conſiderable ſums being upon thoſe occaſions laid out for extra vocal and inſtrumental performers. The public however perſiſted, and, upon BEARD's obſtinacy, who was very ill adviſed, they completely gutted the houſe. The repairs took a fortnight out of the ſeaſon; and, after a few of the ring-leaders had been impriſoned, and the manager had reflected on his folly, it was agreed that full price ſhould only be allowed during the run of a new pantomine. This ſtipulated, the houſe opened with the play of *All's well that Ends well*, and nothing has diſturbed this queſtion ſince.

Nothing material happened after this till the diſpute between the Covent Gardenman agers, a few years after their purchaſe of the patent. COLMAN had taken care to inveſt himſelf with ſuch power by the inſtrument of partnerſhip drawn up among them, that the Court of Chancery, after a very expenſive ſuit, decreed him competent to decide, without controul, upon every ſubject; "for," ſaid Baron SMYTHE, who was one of the judges,

the ſeals being in commiſſion, "otherwiſe the 'agreement muſt have meant, like Trinculo in the "play, that he was to be king, and his partners "were to be viceroys over him." This diſpute was at length amicably adjuſted by the ſeceſſion of COLMAN, who ſold his ſhare to the reſt of the proprietors.

The buſineſs of FOOTE's primitive *Puppet Shew*, which I have already ſpoken of; FIELDING's left handed interference relative to the *Beggar's Opera*, which he maintained created an additional number of thieves every time it was performed, an aſſertion the public conſidered as unfounded, and a bold innovation on their pleaſures; MACKLIN's mad buſineſs about REDDISH's hiſſing him, which ended by a legal deciſion in his favour, and his diſcharge from the theatre, and GARRICK's retirement, a moſt awful moment for the ſtage, are all now which I conceive neceſſary to notice, unleſs I were to go into ſuch kind of minutie as in no reſpect regards the general management of the theatre, or in any reſpect its credit. I ſhall therefore merely add, that, in 1776, GARRICK reſigned the concern into the hands of the preſent proprietor; and that on the twentieth of January, 1779, the world had to lament the loſs of this admirable and very ex-

traordinary man, the moſt natural, the moſt forcible, the moſt correct, and the moſt melancholy memento, to whoſe fame are the words which SHAKESPEAR makes Hamlet apply to his father, and which GARRICK applied to SHAKESPEAR, "We "ſhall not look upon his like again."

To this period I confine myſelf as the proper boundary to a Hiſtory of the Stage. For my own part I will not toil any further. I have not the heart, the conſcience, the courage to do it; and, if any other ſhould chuſe to riſk the conſequences of purſuing ſuch a taſk, I heartily wiſh him well through his fatigue. In my idea, the cataſtrophe is accompliſhed, the play is over, and therefore I drop the curtain at the death of GARRICK; but, as the truth of this poſition will be queſtioned, it is but fit I give the moſt ſatisfactory reaſons in my power for this conduct. I am but a ſervant of the public, and, born for their uſe, I live but to oblige them.

Becauſe then I will not incur the ſuſpicions of an invidious wiſh to wound the feelings of men who, be their abilities what they may, exert that portion of talents with which nature has favoured them for the rational amuſement of the public; and who,

if they fail, have frequently to thank falſe taſte in the encouragement of fanciful, experimental, and innovating writers, to the outrage of probability, truth, reaſon, and the excluſion of weeping nature and offended morality, I drop the curtain at the death of GARRICK.

Becauſe, in purſuing the truth and fidelity of an hiſtorian, I will not run a riſk of reiterating the miſeries and theatrical troubles in the reign of FLEETWOOD, I drop the curtain at the death of GARRICK.

Becauſe I will not painfully rouſe my feelings to deplore that the public will not wake from their ſupineſs, rally their pride, reſume their judgment, and even pity their own weakneſs in permitting the public prints, in the place of honeſt truth and fair candour, to ſet up a corrupt ſyſtem of puffing, of palming off miſerable droſs for ſterling gold, and of dictating to audiences preſcribed principles by which they are arrogantly required to applaud what their duty to their pride, to their underſtandings, to their feelings, to their relatives, and to ſociety, forbids them to tolerate, I drop the curtain at the death of GARICK.

Laſtly, becauſe I will not go into the diſgracious and hateful taſk, of reprobating, in merited terms, the conduct of managers in eſtabliſhing, or the want of ſpirit in the public in permitting, coffee-rooms, lobbies, and other receptacles, for the avowed purpoſe of giving opportunity to eſtrange the affections of young men from their parents, and of huſbands from their wives and families, by an open, unmaſked, and ſhameleſs intercourſe with proſtitutes, to which places they are virtually invited by public advertiſement, as a lounge previous to their admiſſion at half price, to the diſguſt, annoyance, and terror of modeſty. For theſe and many, many, other cogent and ſimilar reaſons, I DROP THE CURTAIN AT THE DEATH OF GARRICK.

THE END.

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